

IDAHO CHARTER SCHOOLS
Program Evaluation Report
Year One

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Executive Summary

The State of Idaho has had charter schools in operation for two years. A total of eight charter schools have opened since Fall 1998, though all but two were in their first year of operation for the 1999-2000 school year. Most of the schools are located in the more populated areas of the state. The total number of students served by charter schools is 935 statewide.

This is the first annual report in a five-year comprehensive evaluation of the Idaho Charter School Program. It examines the charter schools on several quality and viability indicators. The information is based on self-reported data from the schools, site visits, and surveys of key stakeholders. Data are reported in terms of general characteristics, individual school profiles, survey generalizations and site visit reports.

The primary findings of this study are that:

- Schools reported meeting or exceeding over half of their performance goals, the majority of which are related to student achievement.
- The two most popular approaches to instruction are Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound and multiple intelligences. Other common approaches are character instruction, individual education plans, multiage/multigrade, project-based learning, and a technology focus. What makes each school unique is the commitment to a particular vision and mission.
- Student-to-teacher ratios in charter schools are generally lower than in schools' home districts. Average teaching experience is nine years. Only two of the schools have special education certified teachers.
- Governance structures typically consist of a five-to-seven member board comprised primarily of parents, a director/principal of the school, and various committees assigned specific functions.
- Most charter schools had less diversity than their districts' other public schools in terms of standard student demographics (racial backgrounds, free/reduced lunch, Title I, etc.). This is in part because charter schools do not always identify students as such.
- The schools serve a range of kindergarten through twelfth grades, with a roughly even distribution among traditional grade levels.
- Most schools have very high levels of parental involvement. Many reported it to be essential to the school's functioning, though excessive parent involvement was viewed as a weakness by some staff.
- Schools have engaged in various community relations activities, though few are aimed at increasing general public awareness of charter schools.
- Average per-pupil spending in charter schools is approximately that of conventional public schools.
- Previously home schooled students are being attracted into the public system by charter schools.
- Students, parents and teachers were generally satisfied overall with their schools, though there was some concern over the lack of electives and extra-curricular programs.
- Most schools experience challenges with finding and funding adequate facilities.
- Schools have varying amounts of support from their sponsoring districts.

Key recommendations include:

- Encourage schools to rework their performance goals, or measurement of them, as necessary, in order to facilitate the reliable and valid assessment of achievement levels of those goals
- Vary the kind of sponsoring agencies that are able to grant a charter
- Increase state and district financial support of charter schools for facilities and educational program planning and implementation
- Consider equity issues as the charter school program develops
- Increase the public's awareness and understanding of charter schools and their potential impact on the public education system

Introduction

This document is an evaluation report of the Idaho charter schools program. The evaluation was conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), under contract with the Idaho Department of Education. It is the first report in a five-year study of the program; the final report will be completed in 2004. This report contains comprehensive school profiles, an indepth analysis of data collected from eight site visits, and surveys administered to teachers, students, and parents of each charter school. The report also compares data among schools, discusses technical assistance needs, and makes some conclusions and recommendations for future policy.

Charter Schools in Idaho

Idaho is the 31st state in the country to pass a charter school law. Eight charter schools have opened in the state of Idaho since the passage of its Charter School Law in 1998. Other states that created a law that year were Missouri, Utah and Virginia. Of the 32 states that have charter schools in operation, Idaho ranked tenth in terms of the fewest number of schools it has in existence.

This evaluation report includes the eight currently operating charter schools. All but two of the eight schools in this study were in their first year of operation; Moscow and Lost Rivers Charter Schools were in their second year of operation. Most of the schools are very close to large population centers (see Figure 1).

The schools included in the evaluation (and their sponsoring districts) are:

1. Anser Charter School (Boise)
2. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy (Coeur d'Alene)
3. Lost Rivers Charter School (Arco)
4. Meridian Charter School (Meridian)
5. Moscow Charter School (Moscow)
6. Nampa Charter School (Nampa)
7. Pocatello Community Charter School (Pocatello)
8. Renaissance Charter School (Moscow)

Figure 1. Location of Charter Schools Within Idaho



The Evaluation Model

Guiding Questions and Philosophy of the Evaluation

NWREL used three questions¹ to guide the collection, analysis, and reporting of data for this evaluation.

1. Did the charter schools accomplish what they proposed, based on their mission and goals?
2. Did their students meet the achievement levels proposed in their charter school applications?
3. What makes charter schools in Idaho unique?

With eight charter schools in operation, the U.S. Department of Education Charter School Grant has had some impact in Idaho. Charter schools in Idaho offer unique learning opportunities and expanded educational choices to nearly 1,000 students. Charter schools in Idaho also offer opportunities for educators to play new roles and test new forms of school governance. The ultimate success of charter schools in Idaho is, and will be, reflected in their ability to make progress toward the educational mission and goals to which they have agreed to be held accountable, as well as their impact on public education reform. Evaluation is a critical step in the successful demonstration of the accountability and impact of charter schools in Idaho.

This evaluation is guided by the notion that program evaluation is a process done *with* rather than *to* the stakeholders of a charter school. In order for the evaluation to be successful, it must meet the needs of the various stakeholders of each charter school, including the Idaho Department of Education. For this reason, administrators, teachers, parents, and students from each school are included in the evaluation, and the staff of the Idaho Department of Education were, and will continue to be, involved in reviewing draft documents throughout the course of the evaluation.

Data Collection Methods

The evaluation process included three principle components: individual school profiles, surveys and site visits. The first step consisted of a review of existing data (charter applications) and the creation of descriptive profiles for each school based on these data. The review proved to be less helpful than expected. Much of the important information, such as detailed budgets, indepth educational program descriptions, and student achievement data, was not provided in the applications and reports. Each school had the opportunity to provide the missing information. The profiles were sent to the schools for additions and amendments. The completed school profiles can be found in the School Profile section (see Appendix A). The instructions that were sent with the profiles are included at the beginning of Appendix A.

Second, evaluation instruments were designed to complement the existing data. Three separate surveys were developed to address the evaluation questions, one for each group of major stakeholders: parents, students (fourth graders or above), and teachers/administrators.

¹ These questions came from the Massachusetts and Colorado State Charter School Program Evaluation Reports.

All three surveys assessed satisfaction with the school and reasons for either attending, having child(ren) attend, or working at the school. All three surveys also listed a variety of statements about the schools with which respondents rated their level of agreement. The parent and teacher/administrator surveys measured the perceived success of the schools in addressing their mission and goals and the teacher/administrator survey assessed technical assistance needs. Copies of the surveys can be found in Appendices B through D. The mission and performance goals for each school were included with the surveys so that respondents could address questions relating to their school's mission and performance goals.

Surveys were sent to each school for distribution along with instructions and self-addressed stamped envelopes for confidentiality. The three surveys were also posted online for those with Internet access; passwords were required for entry to the surveys. We requested the following participation rate: all teachers and administrators; 30 percent of the student population with a minimum of 30 students, where possible; and 50 parents, where possible.

In order to add depth to this picture, site visits were conducted of all the schools. These visits were included to provide a better understanding of the process occurring at each school, the attainment of proposed goals, and specific challenges as well as positive outcomes experienced by each school. Schools were sent a site visit schedule request so that arrangements could be made for the evaluators to meet with key individuals, conduct small focus groups (with teachers, parents, and students), and observe classroom experiences. Each site visit was unique depending on the school environment and the arrangements that had been made by each school. General site visit protocol, including guiding questions, are included in Appendix E.

Characteristics of Idaho Charter Schools

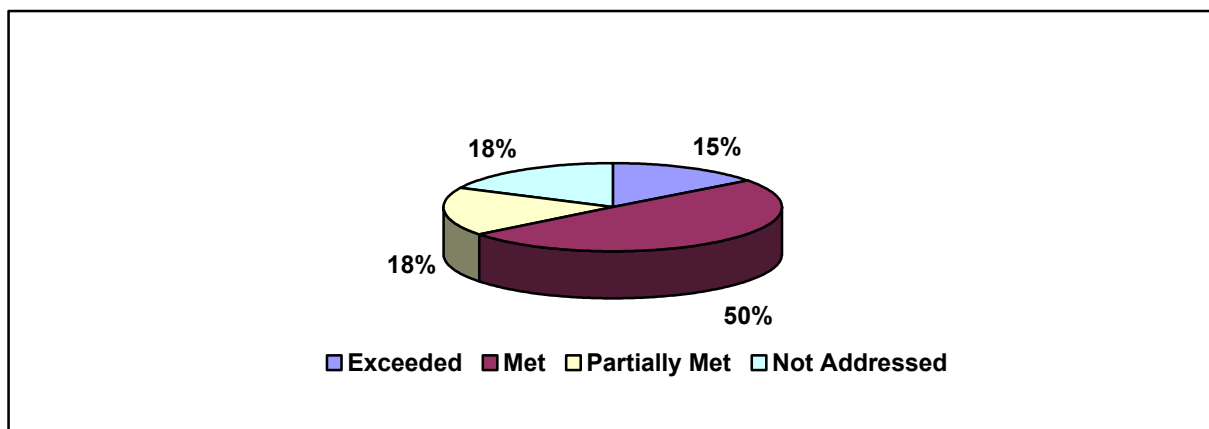
Overview

Profiles were created for each of the eight charter schools included in the evaluation based on a review of existing data (charter applications, grant applications, annual reports). Because not all the information was complete or current, each school was asked to update its profile. The individual school profiles include data separated into five categories: General Descriptions of the school and its students, Educational Program and Assessment, Performance Goals, Governance, and Financial Data and Other Outcomes. General observations of the schools, based on the profile data, are summarized below. Each school's individual profile with school specific data can be found in Appendix A. Most of the schools provided complete and updated profiles; a few left some key items blank. First year profiles will be used as baseline data for the remaining years of the evaluation project.

Adherence to Mission and Performance Goals

The number of goals charter schools set for themselves ranged from two to eight, with most establishing eight goals. The goals varied greatly and were primarily student-centered. Student-centered goals relate to student achievement, personal development, attendance/retention, and student/teacher ratio. Six of the eight schools commented on their progress toward meeting their goals. Of the 34 goals that were established by those six schools, 15 percent were reported as having been exceeded, 50 percent were reported as being met, 18 percent were partially met², and 18 percent were not addressed³ (see Figure 2). Information sources that the schools utilized in order to determine their progress include test scores, grades, teacher reports, projects, portfolios and talent shows. Accomplishment of goals is further discussed in the conclusion and recommendations.

Figure 2. Levels of Accomplishment on Goals for All Charter Schools



² Ratings of "Needs Improvement" were included with "Partially Met."

³ "Did Not Address" category includes situations in which data was not yet compiled, the long-range goal conditions did not yet apply (no high school graduates, yet), or the data was collected as baseline data rather than performance data.

School Size, Enrollment and Admissions

Charter schools in this study served between 20 and 233 students on site, with a median size of 113. The total number enrolled in charters statewide is 935. Five of the schools have at least 100 students. The national median for charter school enrollment was 128 in the 1998-99 school year. The attendance rate for the schools averages 94 percent. (This average is adjusted to account for enrollment differences). The number of students leaving the schools mid-year ranged from five percent to 20 percent of total enrollment. Students left for many reasons, including moving out of the area, lack of satisfaction with the educational program, and expulsion. The schools have a wide range of the number of students on their waiting lists. Admissions policies are open at all Idaho charter schools, though six specifically mentioned having a lottery to select students if space is limited. Three schools mentioned that they give preference to students living in their home district. Table 1 shows these enrollment-related figures for each school.

Table 1. Enrollment, Students Leaving Mid-year and Number of Students on Waiting Lists

School	Enrollment	Students Leaving	Waiting List
Anser	112	6	270
Coeur d'Alene	200	50	—
Lost Rivers	20	1	0
Meridian	114	18	100
Moscow	64	8	4
Nampa	233	17	240
Pocatello	120	21	159
Renaissance	72	6	0
Total	935	127	773

Dual enrollment with other high schools or local colleges is not occurring nearly as much as one might expect.

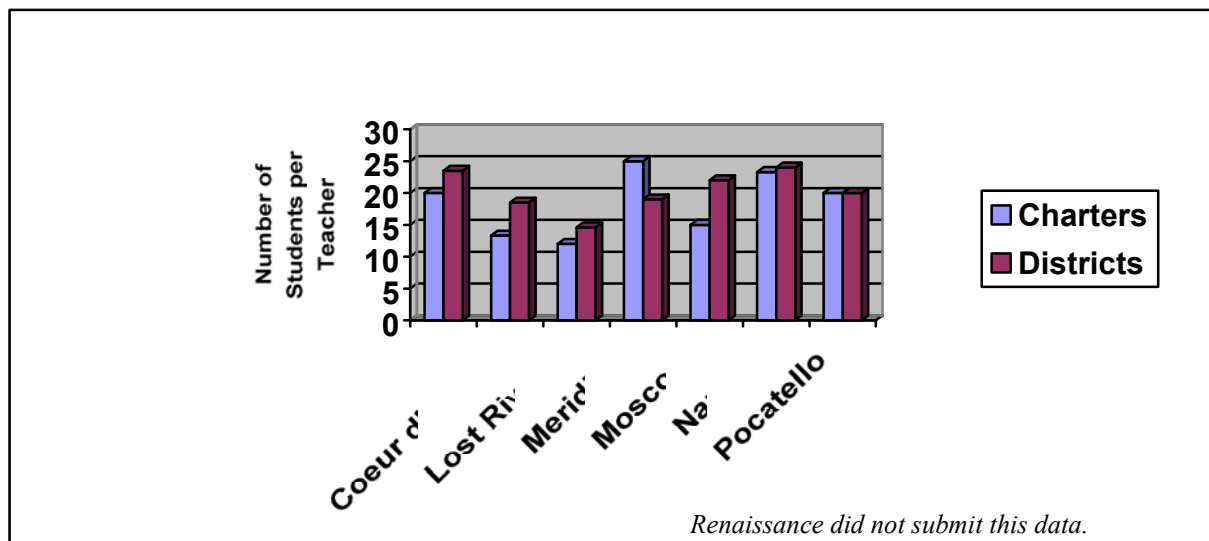
Facility

Four of the eight schools are in permanent facilities and three are in temporary buildings. One school is unsure whether its site will be permanent. Building types included modular buildings, a church basement, a doublewide trailer, converted business buildings, and a new building built for the school by the district. Square footage per student ranged from 50 to 140 square feet. The median size for conventional public schools nationally is 120 square feet per student in elementary schools, and 178 square feet per student in high schools.

Student-to-Teacher and Student-to-Adult Ratios

The average student/teacher ratio of the charter schools is 15-to-1. School averages ranged from 12-to-1 to 25-to-1. The national average for charter schools is 16 students per teacher. Idaho school districts with charters average student/teacher ratio is 20-to-1. Figure 3 shows a comparison of charter versus district ratios (for similar grade levels). Because charter schools generally have high amounts of parent involvement, schools were also asked to report their student/adult ratios. These ranged from eight to 15, with an average student/adult ratio of 11-to-1.

Figure 3. Student-to-Teacher Ratio at Charter Schools and Their Districts



Grade Level/Student Organization

Table 2 shows the breakdown of the number of schools serving various grade level combinations. Some of these schools intend to expand the grade levels that they serve. For example, Meridian Charter School intends to add a grade level each year over the next two years to include the 11th and 12th grades.

Table 2. Number of schools serving various grade level combinations

Grades served	K – 6	K – 8	K – 12	6 – 12	7 - 10	9 - 10
Number of schools	3	1	1	1	1	1

Student Characteristics

Table 3 shows the student demographic data for the charter schools and their districts. In nearly all cases, the charter schools had equal to or less than the number of minority students that their districts enrolled. The same is true for those qualifying for free/reduced lunch, special needs, limited English proficient (LEP), or Title I. One reason contributing to lower numbers of such students is the failure of some charter schools to identify students with special needs or who qualify for additional funding (e.g., Title I).

Children of organizers ranged from zero to 16 percent of the total enrollment of each school, with a weighted average of eight percent.

Table 3. Student Characteristics by Charter Schools and Their Districts

	Ethnic/Racial Composition						Free/ Reduced Lunch	Special Needs	LEP	Title I
	White	Black	Hispanic	Native American	Asian	Total Minority				
Anser Charter	96%	1%	1%	0%	3%	5%	6%	10%	0%	0%
Boise Indep. District	91%	1%	4%	1%	3%	9%	21%	10%	2%	5%
Lost Rivers Charter	92%	0%	8%	0%	0%	8%	75%	16%	3%	3%
Butte County Jt. District	87%	1%	7%	1%	1%	10%	57%	18%	5%	100%
Coeur d'Alene	<i>No data submitted.</i>									
Coeur d'Alene District	97%	<i>No data available.</i>				3%	34%	10%	<1%	9%
Meridian Charter	96%	1%	1%	0%	3%	5%	10%	10%	0%	0%
Meridian Joint District	94%	1%	3%	<1%	2%	6%	12%	9%	1%	—
Moscow Charter	94%	2%	0%	2%	3%	7%	24%	3%	0%	0%
Renaissance Charter	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	30%	0%	0%
Moscow District	93%	1%	2%	1%	3%	7%	25%	20%	1%	4%
Nampa Charter	95%	0%	3%	0%	2%	5%	0%	8%	0%	0%
Nampa School District	75%	1%	23%	0%	1%	25%	48%	12%	18%	22%
Pocatello Charter	97%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	3%	8%	0%	0%
Pocatello District	88%	1%	5%	4%	2%	12%	35%	13%	15%	5%

SOURCE: Charter schools reported on their students' demographic information. District data was received directly from the district offices. Percentages may not add to 100 percent because of rounding errors.

Teacher Characteristics

Idaho Charter Schools employ 37 teachers full-time, and another 23 part-time. The average experience level is over nine years. Sixteen of the teachers have master's degrees. (More information can be found in the teacher survey data on page 15). Two of the schools have certified special education teachers. Only one teacher is teaching outside his or her area of endorsement. At least 12 teachers have departed from their positions at charter schools this year for reasons including moving out of the area, resignation, budget cuts and dismissal because of philosophical differences.

Educational Programs

Table 4 shows the educational programs used by each school and the total percentage of schools using each program. The two most frequently used programs are hands-on/experiential and multiple intelligences. Other programs that are offered by over half of the schools are project-based learning, technology, multiage/multigrade, individual education plans, and character instruction.

Most of these programs are not unique in and of themselves. What is unique is that each school practices, or at least aims to practice, schoolwide application of its particular programs.

Performance Assessments

Table 5 shows the performance assessments used by each school. The Direct Writing and Mathematics Assessments and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills were the most often used standardized tests. Portfolios and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) were the most often used non-standardized assessments. Six schools responded to a question about the use of standardized tests for formative purposes; these included gauging student weaknesses and the development of IEPs, informing teachers about gaps in instruction, and alignment of concepts between grade levels.

Table 4. Educational Programs Used

	Anser	Coeur d'Alene	Lost Rivers	Meridian	Moscow	Nampa	Pocatello	Renaissance	Total % Using
Block scheduling			X	X				X	38%
Character Instruction	X			X	X	X		X	63%
Core Knowledge					X	X			25%
Extended year/day									0%
Foreign Language at all grades					X	X		X	38%
Hands-on/Experiential	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	88%
Individual Education Plans		X	X		X		X	X	63%
Multiage/grade	X		X		X		X	X	63%
Multiple Intelligences	X		X		X	X	X	X	75%
Service Learning	X					X		X	38%
Technology as major focus			X	X	X	X		X	63%
Thematic/Interdisciplinary	X			X	X			X	50%
Year-Round						X			13%
Project-Based			X	X	X		X	X	63%
Training to be Life Long Learners	X								13%

Table 5. Performance Assessments Used

	Anser	Coeur d'Alene	Lost Rivers	Meridian	Moscow	Nampa	Pocatello	Renaissanc e	TOTAL % USING
CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS and NORM-REFERENCED TESTS									
Direct Writing Assessment*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100%
Direct Mathematics Assessment*	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	88%
Direct Science Assessment								X	13%
Direct Social Studies Assessment								X	13%
Idaho Reading Indicator*	X					X	X		38%
Iowa Test of Basic Skills*	X	X	X		X	X	X		75%
Test of Achievement and Proficiency*		X		X					25%
ACT				X					13%
SAT		X		X					25%
PSAT		X							13%
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS									
Portfolios	X		X	X	X		X	X	75%
Individual Education Plans				X	X	X	X	X	63%
Other							Stanford, STAR reading		13%

**Currently required by the state for various grade levels.*

Governance

Board membership ranged from five to seven individuals. Parents were the most prevalent type of member, followed by community members, then staff. No students were reported as board members, though they were included in committees. Committees were also composed primarily of parents. Committee functions included advisory boards, parent and student councils, facility and finance, and textbook selection.

Parent and Volunteer Involvement

Estimated parent involvement ranged from 10 to 200 hours per week for the five schools that reported on this indicator. Many of these hours are volunteered in the classroom. Other volunteer hours totaled approximately 250 hours per week. Types of involvement included writing the school newsletter, fundraising, board membership, coordinating field trips and enrichment programs, and assisting with school lunches.

Funding

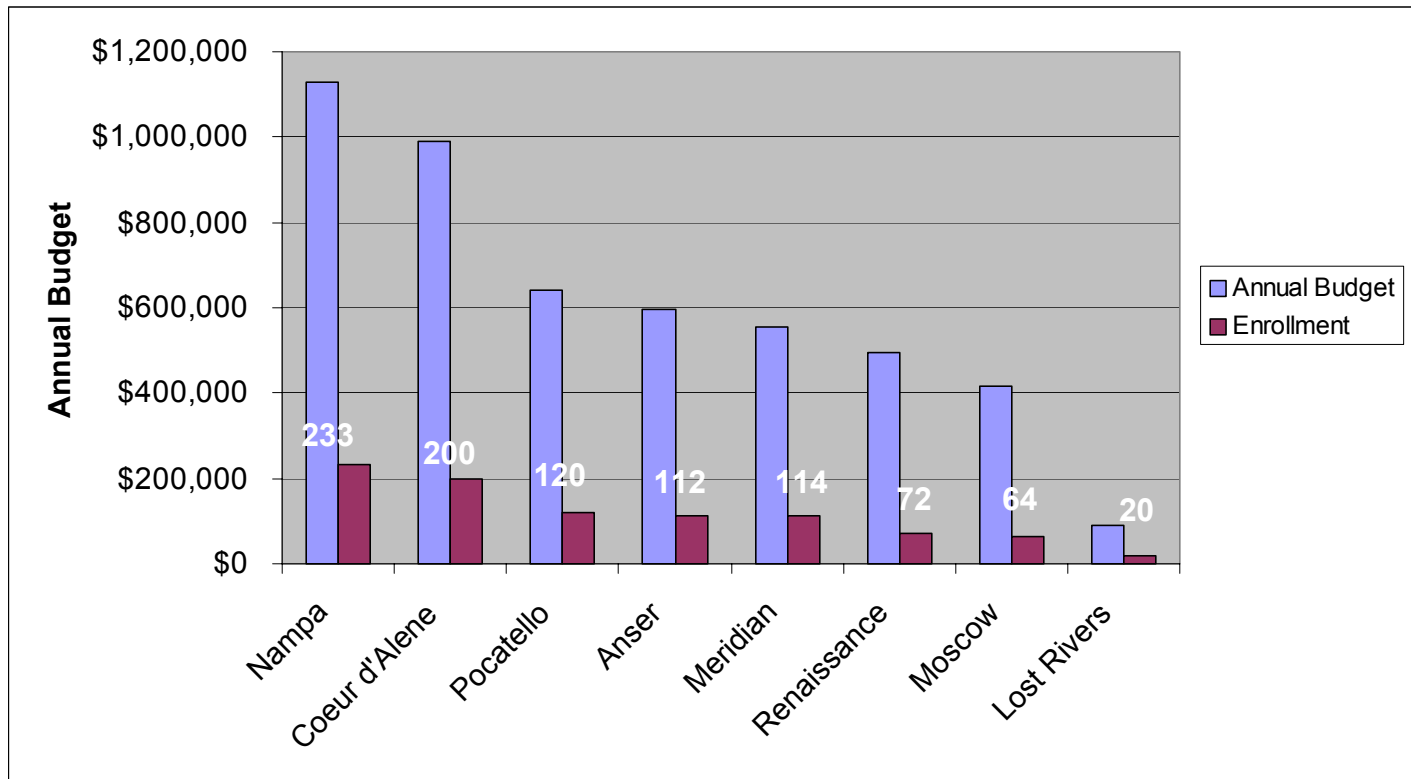
School operating budgets ranged from \$89,000 to \$1,127,500. Though there is some variation, there are no unusual budgets relative to enrollment. Figure 4 shows the annual operating budget for each school and is accompanied by enrollment figures (in white). Actual budget figures for each school can be found in the individual school profiles. Estimated cost per student ranges from \$3,500 to \$6,880, with an average of \$4,945. The average cost per student for the districts with charters is \$4,493.

All of the schools reported receiving grant money in addition to funding from the state and their local districts. Four schools reported receiving donations as well. Five schools receive federal funding for special programs (e.g., Title I), though one reported that not all funds were being received, and another was unsure if all funds were being received.

Community Relations

Each of the eight charter schools engage in a variety of community relations activities, including being involved in community service activities; keeping parents and community members informed about school activities; holding public information meetings; working cooperatively to share facilities; working with community agencies and institutes; maintaining cooperative relationships with community businesses; sponsoring and participating in community gatherings and fairs; and maintaining cooperative relationships with Idaho universities.

Figure 4. Annual Operating Budgets and Enrollment



Survey Generalizations

Table 6 gives the numbers of surveys returned for each group in each school as well as the enrollment for each school. It is important to keep in mind that the number of surveys returned may or may not reflect the enrollment and staff numbers of the school. Also note that some of the information differs slightly from that found in the profiles.

The researchers requested that schools administer the surveys to at least 30 percent (or a minimum of 30 total) of their students, and that those surveys were to be postmarked by April 21. Those not returned by May 12 are not included in the results. See individual school profiles for staff numbers, the Data Collection section for methodology, and Appendices B through D for the actual surveys.

Table 6. Number of surveys returned

School	Total Enrollment	Number of surveys returned		
		Parents	Students	Teachers/Adm.
Anser	112	17	30 (27%)	6
Coeur d'Alene	200	24	51 (26%)	12
Lost Rivers	12	2	0	0
Meridian	114	26	40 (35%)	11
Moscow	64	32	14 (22%)	6
Nampa	233	31	33 (14%)	10
Pocatello	120	32	15 (13%)	4
Renaissance	72	14	18 (25%)	3

Teacher/Administrator Survey

A total of 52 teachers and administrators responded to the survey. Note that these responses vary from the information contained in the surveys; not all teachers and administrators submitted surveys. Of those teaching, five were teaching in areas outside their endorsement. These areas included literature, science, math, health, and personal development. Three of the four administrators who participated in the survey held administrative credentials.

Years of experience in schools ranged from one to 34 years, with an average of nearly 11 years experience. Less than 20 percent of teachers/administrators had two or fewer years of experience, which contradicts a popular belief that most charter schools hire inexperienced (and thus less expensive) teachers. Nearly 40 percent of respondents had over 10 years of experience; 22 percent had over 20 years of experience. Seventy five percent of respondents have experience in conventional public schools with an average of 10 years. Twenty five percent have experience in private/parochial schools. (Note: these two areas of experience were not mutually exclusive.) Other areas of experience included university, preschool, the military, community music school and alternative school.

Level of education: The majority (53 percent) of staff surveyed stated that a bachelor's degree was the highest degree held. Twenty-one percent had earned a master's degree, and four percent had earned a doctorate. The majority of degrees were held in education,

followed by counseling or psychology. Only two of the respondents' highest degrees were in a science, and none had majored in mathematics. (The survey did not ask about all degrees held.) Three of the staff reported being specialists in special education, math or electronics.

Opportunities for staff development included:

- Workshops, guest speakers
- Classes on reading and teaching reading
- Three computer classes; a gifted and talented workshop; an art workshop
- There was one districtwide workshop that was optional dealing with special needs students
- Many classes at the university
- Math conferences in Portland, OR
- Onsite computer classes in order to prepare for the State Technology exam
- Concept based teaching
- Art inservice with modeling, technology courses, and gifted/talented training
- Learning about education finance - I would highly recommend that the SDE take a more active role in training personnel [in] being prepared for starting school, etc.
- The Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound approach to education
- None

The top five *reasons for working at the charter school* were:

- Educational program (87% rated this as a very important reason)
- Interested in being involved in an education reform effort (79%)
- Opportunity to work with like minded educators (74%)
- High emphasis on academics (73%)
- Safety/climate at school (62%)

Other motivating reasons for working at the charter school were:

- I am the principal author of the charter
- I was contacted by the school
- I helped design the school and wanted to see the design implemented
- Technology emphasis
- Strong leadership of administration
- Motivated staff; parent support; goal oriented school
- To have a voice in the decisionmaking process
- Consistency in educational program
- I am allowed to bring my newborn to work with me

Convenient location and difficulty in finding other positions were rated as “not important” by the majority of respondents (57% and 83%, respectively).

When asked whether the school met their initial expectation, 74 percent stated that it had done so. Concerns that were expressed included:

“We are way overworked.”

“Things have not been as organized as I had expected.”
“My expectations were unrealistic.”
“More involved in setting up the infrastructure of a school than I ever imagined.”
“I could answer this question just as easily with a "yes." Some aspects have definitely matched my expectations but there have been a huge number of unexpected obstacles.”
“Far too much parent involvement.”

Founders or original staff members comprised 79 percent of respondents. Reasons for starting the school included:

“A firm belief in [our] mission...”
“A place where students could be held more accountable.”
“...Reform in education.”
“Autonomy, small setting, motivated staff, new challenge.”
“Create a supporting environment for teacher innovations.”
“Dissatisfied with the curriculum and ratios in the district schools for my own children.”
“[To meet] the educational needs of the population it serves.”
“New opportunities and professional growth.”
“To give parents options.”
“To offer an educational choice to those who attend public schools.”

When asked about their *level of satisfaction* on a variety of aspects of the school, teachers rated these as the top five:

- School mission (96% stated they were either satisfied or very satisfied)
- Professional development activities (89%)
- Evaluation or assessment of [teacher] performance (87%)
- Students academic performance (85%)
- Overall school climate/environment (80%)

The most negative satisfaction levels had to do with the availability of computers and other technology. Nearly 10 percent of respondents said they were “very dissatisfied” with this aspect of their charter schools.

Teachers/administrators agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about their schools, with all but one of these statements exceeding the 90 percent level. At least 50 percent of respondents strongly agreed with all but one of the statements.

About the students and the school

- It is important for our school to be held accountable to its performance goals. (A total of 98% either agreed or strongly agreed; 60 % strongly agreed.)
- The school has high standards and expectation for students. (96%; 62%)
- I think this school has a bright future. (94%; 68%)
- Students feel safe at this school. (94%; 60%)

- The quality of instruction is high. (94%; 51%)
- There is commitment to the mission of the school. (93%; 60%)
- This school reflects a community atmosphere. (87%; 62%)

About parents

- Parents can influence instructional and school activities. (98%; 51%)
- Parents are involved in instructional and school activities. (96%; 51%)

Teachers/Administrators about themselves

- Teachers are autonomous and creative in their classes. (94%; 59%)
- Teachers are challenged to be effective. (94%; 47%)
- Teachers and school leadership are accountable for student achievement and performance. (93%; 59%)

The majority of teachers/administrators disagreed or strongly disagreed on several negatively worded statements:

- Class sizes are too large to meet individual student needs. (81%)
- Lack of student discipline hinders my ability to teach and the opportunity for other students to learn. (72%)
- Teachers are disenchanted with what can be accomplished at this school. (70%)
- Teachers are insecure about their future at the school. (66%)

Agreement was roughly split on the following issues:

- The school has sufficient financial resources
- Teachers have many non-instructional duties
- Support services (counseling, health care, etc) are available to students

Two other areas that the survey addressed are special needs students and meeting of school missions:

- Just over half (55%) of teachers/administrators believe that their schools are serving students with special needs well. Fifteen percent stated that students' needs were not being served, 13 percent did not know, and 11 percent thought that the question did not apply to their school.
- 77 percent thought that their respective schools were meeting or exceeding their stated missions; approximately one-third of those thought the schools were exceeding their missions. Seventeen percent stated that they were partially meeting their mission.

The following are teachers' greatest perceived strengths and weaknesses of the schools.
The most frequently mentioned strengths and weaknesses are starred:

Strengths

- Public funding
- = Parent involvement
- = Administration
- Small size
- Flexibility
- Safe environment
- High standards

- The collaboration among grade levels and alignment in subject areas and behavioral expectations
- Board support

- Common mission and commitment shared by all

Weaknesses

- = Lack of funding
- = Parent involvement
- = Administration/leadership
- No lunch program
- Facilities
- Lack of sports program
- Inability to address individual student needs without lowering academic rigor
- The lack of knowledge about charter schools by the general public

- Board making policy decisions based on parent input, not including staff. Not enough autonomy of teachers and administration
- Evaluation
- Holding the students to high academic standards
- Lack of diverse backgrounds on the staff. There [are] a multitude of tasks involved with the operation of a school that have little to do with education
- Staff not sticking to original vision
- Lack of collegial activities of the staff
- Long-term planning and structure

General comments about the schools included:

"The success of this school is 100% tied to whether the community and board will ultimately permit the administration and teachers to run the school!"

"This survey should be a baseline for measuring future success or failure. Nothing from this survey should be taken to indicate the success or failure of the mission to date. A first year operation of any kind is going to have problems."

"Training the Board of Directors in their responsibilities as members. What's needed to have a successful school [is to] have regional training and meetings."

"We are currently involved in a serious problem that has compromised our educational program greatly. Surveys are extremely frustrating and I'm concerned at the accuracy of the picture you will get from staff and parents because of the complexity of the situation at present."

"We can improve in all areas and would welcome assistance in any area."

Student Surveys

A total of 201 students completed surveys. Table 7 shows the types of schools in which students were enrolled.

Table 7. Types of previous enrollment

Type of school in which previously enrolled	Percentage of respondents
Conventional public school	87%
Another charter school	0%
Alternative public school	2%
Private/parochial school	11%
Home school	7%
Did not attend school	0%
Other (English schools)	1%

Eighty-seven percent of students reported that they had *previously attended* conventional public school. Charter schools attracted 17 percent of their students back into public education from non-public educational arenas. Over 10 percent had previously attended private/parochial schools. Seven percent were home schooled; 87 percent of those who were home schooled were in fifth grade or above.

The number one *reason for enrolling* in the charter school was "My parents thought this was a better school for me"; 70 percent of students rated this reason as "very important." The next most highly rated reasons were "We heard the teachers were better at this school"(48% rated this "very important"), "This school has interesting things to do"(47%), and "This school is a comfortable place" (47%).

When asked to list other reasons for choosing the school, students cited the following:

"We thought that there might be more of an opportunity to learn about stuff for a future job."

"We thought that it would look better on my college application."

"We knew the people starting it."

"We heard it was stricter. There was no name-calling."

"We figured I would have a better chance of doing something with my career."

"Self paced."

"New schools are usually better run and get more funding."

"My parents started this school."

"My Mom liked the uniforms."

"My family chose this school because of it's rules, environment, and the boundaries of the school."

Students were asked to rate statements about their schools. The top five statements with which at least 90 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed, are (in order of agreement):

- Teachers and administrators know me by name. (95%)
- There are rules in the school we must follow. (94%)
- My teacher is available to talk to me or help me when I need it. (94%)
- The school building is clean and well taken care of. (92%)
- I feel safe at this school. (90%)

Special needs: 66 percent of students believe that their school helps all students learn, including those with special physical or learning needs. Just over 20 percent said they did not know, while only 5 percent of students said that their school did not help all students or that this question did not apply.

The following comments are regarding the students' *greatest perceived strengths and weaknesses* of the schools:

Strengths

- The small social structure
- The math program which allows us to move at our own pace
- The kids are included in the voting
- The grading system
- The freedom; the resources; the teachers
- How small it is and how you get to know the teachers better than at public schools
- Being able to work at my own pace
- The fact that there is the possibility for change if something doesn't work or could be improved there is a greater chance than it will be in normal schools
- The enrichment
- I feel safer here, and accepted

Weaknesses

- We need a bus system
- The temporary modular classrooms, but we had to start somewhere
- The playground
- Poor organization, not as flexible as it could be
- We need a bigger budget, more teachers, more equipment
- Not everything is finished
- How we had to move schools
- I dislike not having any sports that interact with other schools
- I don't like not having many electives to choose from
- It's new, so the teachers are trying out new things and sometimes this can get very confusing

Some students stated that strengths included the resources and small size, while others found their school decidedly lacking in resources and classes offered. Some students found the small size to be a detriment. Other comments that were contributed by students include:

- “We need the programs to work smoother.”
- “This school is now running smoothly after a rocky start.”
- “This school has a cool vision.”
- “Sports will build up school spirit.”
- “Needs more teacher evaluations.”
- “More elective options, possibly offer German for foreign language.”
- “I think we should have a playground.”
- “Being the first year I think that we have had some 'growing' pains.”
- “Our school doesn't keep in touch with other schools.”
- “A better structure needs to be established, but one that allows changes to be made.”

Parent Surveys

One hundred and seventy-seven parents completed surveys. The majority (64%) reported having one child enrolled in the charter school; nearly one-third had two children enrolled.

The *distance that families lived from the charter schools* ranged from less than one mile to 45 miles, with the average distance being 5½ miles. The majority (67%) traveled less than two miles to the school. Twenty-one percent live a distance greater than seven miles from the school.

Parents rated the following as the top five *reasons why they sent their children to the charter school*. At least three-fourths of parents rated these as “very important”:

- Unique opportunities for my child at the charter school (93%)
- Educational program (93%)
- Good teachers and high quality instruction (87%)
- I prefer the emphasis and educational philosophy of this school (84%)
- Academic reputation (high standards) of this school (75%)

An open-ended question solicited these responses as other reasons for selecting that school:

- Uniforms
- Their standards and philosophies are much higher and stronger than public school
- Their curriculum was far superior to the private school we were attending
- The lack of respect and discipline at public schools
- Teaching methodology (project based learning). Portfolio tracking
- Small, private school atmosphere without the outrageous expense
- Safety was a big issue
- Philosophy—Collaborative effort from entire staff

- Multiage classrooms, the recognition that everyone learns differently and so teaching is geared to individual
- I wanted my children to be in a more controlled environment with smaller numbers
- Double standard at previous school—one for Caucasians and another for Indians—taught my kids to be prejudice
- Discipline and character building are the important factors

Eighty-one percent of parents stated that they were familiar with their *school's mission*. After reading a copy of the mission statement (which was attached to the each school's survey), a total of 70 percent of parents believed that the school was *meeting or exceeding its mission*; nearly one-third of those thought the school was exceeding its mission. This roughly reflects the perceptions of teachers/administrators regarding the mission.

Eighty-four percent of parents stated the charter school had met *initial expectations*. Comments regarding expectations included:

- Considering it's the first year for this charter school, the school has exceeded my expectations for my son
- Growing pains but overall, phenomenal success for just getting off the ground.
- No physical education program
- Poor management, administration, communication
- Small school has led to a seemingly overly powerful parent group and too much gossip
- I don't feel the personal attention my child was promised has been delivered.

In *rating satisfaction*, at least 90 percent of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the following aspects of the schools:

- Potential for parent involvement (97%)
- Educational program (96%)
- Teachers and other school staff (95%)
- Their child's academic achievements (92%)
- Overall school climate/environment (91%)
- Class sizes (90%)

Parents were least satisfied with school resources and physical facilities, with 25 and 27 percent, respectively, of parents stating that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with these aspects of their schools.

Parents were asked to rate their agreement with several statements about their charter schools. Over 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that:

- The quality of instruction is high (95%)
- My child is motivated to learn (94%)
- The school is supporting innovative practice (93%)
- Parents have the ability to influence the direction of the school (92%)

Another statement with which parents agreed of strongly agreed (89%) was that “the school is meeting my child’s needs.” Parents were roughly split on whether support services (e.g., counseling, health care, etc.) were available for their children.

When asked about whether they thought the school was meeting the needs of *special needs students*, only 35 percent said yes. Thirty-nine percent of parents said they did not know, and 19 percent said special needs did not apply to their school. Six percent of parents believed that special needs were not being addressed.

Parents reported a variety of *types of involvement* with their schools. Their contributions are shown in Table 8. Most involvement took the form of volunteering. Volunteer hours ranged from zero to 40 hours per month.

Table 8. Types of Parent Involvement

Percentage of Parents	Type of Involvement
10%	Planning/founder
24%	School committee member
6%	Board member
47%	Volunteer hours
29%	Other
13%	None

“Other” involvement included:

- Cook or lunch program
- Supportive parent
- Fund raising
- Periodical special activities/teaching
- Grant writing assistance
- Donations

The following comments are regarding the parents’ greatest perceived strengths and weaknesses of the schools:

Strengths

- Willingness to try innovative approaches
- We have a committed parent force and have overcome many first year crises
- The vision of the administration
- The freedom to accept suggestions and act on them
- The flexibility and innovation
- Small class size and one-on-one attention from the teachers
- Professional and caring staff
- Positive attitude and belief in mission statement
- Parent involvement
- Individual attention to students
- High academic standards

- Excellent leadership by principal, teachers and involved parents
- Cohesive philosophy among staff

“Facilities” was the most frequently mentioned weakness. This corresponds to the dissatisfaction mentioned by parents in another section of the survey. Other weaknesses included:

Weaknesses

- Propensity to fall back into "normal/traditional" school and teaching styles.
- Lack of funding, no lunch program, no buses, etc.
- Parental exhaustion from volunteering.
- The science program is very weak. There are no science facilities at the school.
- The lack of experience, but that will come.
- [Lack of a] hot lunch program.
- [Lack of] school board support.
- Inexperience of the teaching staff. Lack of effective discipline policy.
- Since almost all of the board members have children in the school, they many times make decisions based on what is the best for their children as opposed to what is best for the majority of the students. There is a tendency to want to do every new idea or approach all at once, instead of getting one thing off the ground and then progressing to the next step.
- The fact that it has only been open for one year.
- The "special interest parent groups". I think their personal agendas—to make it a private school and limit class size are non-constructive.
- Lack of initial training and curriculum.
- Organizational development.
- Founders needed to back off and let the committees made up by teachers and parents do their job.
- Instability—because of this being the first year in operation.
- Lack of adequate administration to implement the charter and manage financial matters.
- Lack of support from the local school district.

Several schools’ parents reported conflicting strengths and weaknesses regarding leadership. At one school, for example, a strength was seen as the amount of parent involvement; however, another parent stated as a weakness that there was too much consensus and no strong leadership. Parents of another school disagreed on the style of the principal. Other parents disagreed over class size and educational program.

The following are selected quotes:

“The school has been wildly successful for it's first year! I'm tickled to be along for the ride toward a school that will be recognized as a leader in innovative educational opportunities for students of all abilities.”

“I like that parents are involved in the policymaking that goes on at the school. They are listened to and their ideas are implemented. Parents, teachers, administrators working together for the good of the children.”

“The [City] Community does not seem to have an understanding of ‘Charter Schools’ and do not/have never heard the mission statement, though most of the people who ask about [our] charter school are truly interested and seem to be positive and open-minded.”

“The local school district sees us as a threat to their status quo. We are dependent on them for access to resources. Nevertheless, I feel certain my child is much farther along than she would have been at the conventional public school.”

“Some requirements stated in I.D.E.A. did not take place at a recent IEP meeting for my son. Additional training regarding these regulations may be needed.”

“We need to have more of these charter schools in the Valley.”

“I am not a fan of innovative practice. It is the philosophy of the school that ‘we give students the opportunity to fail’ and the school leadership and some teachers take NO responsibility for student achievement.”

“We are happy to have a choice where our daughter can attend school.”

“Charter schools may not be the panacea for the educational woes of this country, but ... with inspired leadership and talented teachers, miracles can be accomplished in the classroom.”

“Lack of leadership, confusion over ‘shared leadership’ has contributed to the challenging first year. There needs to be more support in place for start-up funding for new charter schools.”

“We love and fully support the mission of our charter school. But we feel that errors made in the planning stages resulted in disaster for the school. Simply put, the school was not ready to open on September 5, and it is still not ready.”

Technical Assistance Needs

During their participation in the surveys, teachers and administrators were asked to check any areas of technical assistance that are needed at their schools. Table 9 shows the frequency of expressed needs. The areas in which the highest needs were expressed are governance and leadership, personnel issues, improving facilities, and school finance/budgeting.

Table 9. Areas of Expressed Need

Expressed Need	Frequency
Governance and leadership	16
Personnel issues	16
Improving facilities	16
School finance/budgeting	15
Program evaluation	13
Community relations	11
Alignment of curriculum with state standards	7
Charter renewal	5
Regulatory issues	4
Accreditation	3

Two other areas of expressed need were fund raising and teaching resources.

Site Visits

The site visits occurred from May 5, 2000 to May 17, 2000. The schools were visited on the following dates:

- Anser Charter School (May 5)
- Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy (May 17)
- Lost Rivers Charter School (May 16)
- Meridian Charter School (May 10)
- Moscow Charter School (May 15)
- Nampa Charter School (May 9)
- Pocatello Community Charter School (May 15)
- Renaissance Charter School (May 16)

Common themes emerged during the visits, including leadership, district oversight, and unique features of the schools. Several of the schools have struggled with inexperienced leadership. It seems that the strongest schools had a clearly defined vision and strong administrative leadership; specific educational programs were secondary to their success as viable organizations. Effective leadership was deemed essential in mediating heavy parent involvement. Strong leadership often contributed to positive relations with the sponsoring district, though this was not always the case. Schools that are supported by the district seem infinitely more sustainable as well as equitable in terms of availability of student services (e.g., transportation).

In several cases, the relationship between the district and the charter school was yet to be defined. Some school staff expressed concern about additional requirements from their districts and were unsure about the extent of their school's autonomy. Also, it is unclear the extent to which the districts are not passing along special state and federal funding (e.g., technology) to the charter schools.

Personnel issues were another challenge experienced by several schools. Philosophical differences of some teachers led to a breakdown of the cohesion that many staff stated as a crucial factor making charter schools unique from conventional public schools. In fact, teachers and administrators believed that their programs could be transferred to the conventional public schools if and only if all staff shared the same philosophy, whatever that might be.

Another key factor contributing to charter schools' uniqueness is their small size. Many parents and teachers mentioned the metaphor of the school as a "family." Climate and communication were also cited frequently as benefits of small school size. Students felt that they could express themselves and that their words meant something. Students were also able to be critical of issues regarding charter schools, pointing out both shortcomings and benefits.

What follows are observations from each site visit. Emphasis was given to the most salient features of each school.

ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL

Anser Charter School is located along one side of a large building that it shares with a gymnastics academy. The school recently moved into the building after being housed at a less desirable temporary site. The building is located in a business park adjacent to the Boise River. Students have access to the facility pool and to the back property that is in the process of being renovated into a playground.

The school is operating at full capacity and has a waiting list of 300 students. It is assumed that those on the waiting list are not necessarily dissatisfied with the conventional public schools; rather, they are excited about the prospect of “something more.” While a few other public schools do have multiage programs, the style of learning at Anser differs greatly. Anser utilizes Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) school-wide, which is not generally found at other public schools. Teachers are also sharing their expeditions with other ELOB schools around the country. One of the program challenges is to make assessment consistent across the school. Anser is an ungraded school. Students work on a point system, and most teachers use portfolio and rubric assessment.

One of Anser’s greatest strengths appears to be its parent and community involvement. Parents participate in many ways: in the classroom, assisting with facility issues, office support, strategic planning, calendar planning, and fundraising. Parents are responsible for the school’s enrichment program, from planning it to teaching it. The enrichment program takes place every Wednesday afternoon in lieu of regular classes. The community of Anser is not contained just within its school walls. Twenty-one different businesses have participated in both the enrichment program and events this year. The school has a relationship with the university for gymnastics and “literature buddies.” Boise State University is also involved with Anser’s strategic planning.

Parents are excited about Anser for several reasons. The environment is described as warm and supportive, and children are encouraged to develop leadership qualities. Parents are supportive of the educational program, both in terms of its academic excellence and character development. The multiage program also attracted many parents. Children are encouraged to develop at their own individual pace, but they must take responsibility for their own learning. Parents believe that there is a high degree of intrinsic motivation fostered at the school for students as well as parents (the latter in terms of their involvement). While parents are very happy with the first year accomplishments, the parents do see opportunity for positive changes.

When asked what they missed about the conventional public schools, parents, teachers and students mentioned lack of a hot lunch program, music and art, and organized sports. Currently students can buy lunch on Friday only; parents assist with the pick-up of sandwiches or burritos. There are plans to begin an expanded lunch program next year.

Unlike in the conventional public schools, teachers feel that there is flexibility for them to adopt or modify programs as necessary. They do not need to stick to a particular program if they see it is not working out as well as they had hoped. For example, early in the year Anser adopted a math program that teachers later thought needed to be supplemented.

The issue of selectivity received varied responses. Some teachers and parents believed that the school was perhaps the most diverse in the district in terms of socioeconomic backgrounds of the students. Parents did admit that they were fairly like-minded individuals, but that there was diversity among them. Some thought that Anser took away parent support from the conventional public schools. One parent stated that the selectivity of the school has less to do with income level as it did with having time to commit to the school.

One of the difficulties, yet perhaps one of the most positive outcomes of the first year development, is that one of the original founders realized that she is more of a start-up person rather than an implementation person. She has since left Anser to start other endeavors. Often charter schools grapple with this situation and do not deal with the issue until excessive damage has occurred.

In terms of transferability to the larger public system, the greatest barriers are lack of board support and buy-in from all staff. At Anser, the teachers and administration share the same vision. There is much collaboration and no one is stopping them from further developing their program. Time constraints are seen as another barrier. The conventional public schools are seen as doing things in “pieces,” whereas at Anser it’s about “wholes.” However, this is not to say that members of the Anser community thought that all public schools should be like Anser. Rather, the charter school is viewed as a *choice* instead of “getting what you get” in the conventional public schools. Another issue that was raised regarding dissatisfaction with the district was the apparent uneven distribution of resources among its schools. It was thought that some schools received more attention in the way of repairs and amenities, while others (often the schools in less affluent neighborhoods) struggled with their facilities and other resources.

The relationship with the district is fair. Since the arrival of a new superintendent, there has been greater support. The district provides training to classroom coordinators. However, there was concern about maintaining districts as the only charter granting agencies, since the arrangement can be problematic for charter schools who are not supported by their district.

COEUR D’ALENE CHARTER ACADEMY

Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy is located in a five-year old building in a suburban business district of Coeur d’Alene. The school converted a former Pet and Garden center to accommodate the needs of their school. The building is tall and open, with classrooms of varying sizes, and the administrator and office staff have separate offices. The Academy is unsure as to whether this building will serve as their permanent home.

Currently, the school serves grades 7 through 10 and intends to expand to grade 12, adding a grade each year over the next two years. The school contracts for counselor services and special education services when needed. Students can opt to go to the regular public schools for sports or participate in a limited offering of after-school sports coached by teachers. When asked what they miss about other public schools, parents mentioned the lack of extra curricular activities, choice in electives which are currently limited, and transportation since many parents must drive their children to school. However, parents pointed out that they are able to supplement the limited offerings with other after-school options.

The educational program is directed towards college bound students, emphasizing English, math, and social studies as well as process skills and thinking skills. Also included are Latin, Spanish and French classes. While Internet access is limited, the school is in the process of applying for grants to increase technological support. There is a dual enrollment option with the local community college that is fully paid for by the charter school. Students could conceivably graduate with an AA degree.

The school is noted for its rigor. There is a great deal of homework and a rigorous grading system. The administrator explained the school emphasis on difficulty as, “it has to be hard to be fun” and posits that “nobody has fun dunking over their smaller sister.” There was an adjustment period to this approach and students initially received more D’s and F’s and fewer A’s and B’s than they had received at their previous schools. Some parents mentioned their concern that, because of the adjustment period, grades don’t actually reflect their level of learning and will affect university acceptance. Many students did not adjust and left the school during this first year.

However, parents and staff feel that the school is meeting a need of the community for a safer, more academically challenging school. The challenging academics appeal to some parents and/or students whose needs were not being met in other schools. One parent commented that the school is like a private school, with morals and high expectations – without having to pay the expense. Parents reported that they have seen a dramatic improvement in study habits and that their children seem to enjoy the learning process. Students commented that the work in the charter school was a lot harder, but recognized that they were also learning more. One student commented that she had learned to take more responsibility without being asked, both at school and at home. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to be part of the change process and offer an alternative for parents and students.

Parents feel their children are as safe as possible and students reported they were not harassed at this school. However, one parent suggested that parents have a false sense of security and had the perception that the school lacked the procedures and training necessary to handle fire drills or lock down procedures.

Parents appreciate the close bond between teachers and students. One parent pointed out that teachers will take the time to talk with students about things other than school and commented that it was “as close to family as one could get.” Teachers also commented

on the ability to provide individual attention because of the small class size. Parents felt that, unlike other public schools, there was no harassment at this school and there was less “cliquishness.” They attributed these outcomes to smaller class size, the use of school uniforms, and the expectation of respectful behavior required by school staff.

There is an active Parent Volunteer Organization (PVO) and meetings are well attended. Parents reported the administration to be approachable and open, and felt like they were part of the school. Parents compared their experience of feeling welcomed at the charter school to their previous experiences in other public schools in which the response to parents was much more hesitant. Administration also commented that parents were very involved. However, contrary to parents’ perceptions of welcomeness, administration also indicated that parents were sometimes involved to the point of interference.

Students reported feeling safe, challenged, and listened to at the charter school and they reported a climate of respect. They felt the use of uniforms addressed some of the inequalities in schools, but pointed out that there was still a popularity contest within the school. Students valued the time teachers took to talk with students and commented often about teachers willingness to explain things. Students also appreciated the opportunity to get to know everyone as a result of smaller class sizes. Students were generally positive about charter schools and felt there should be more schooling options. One student felt she had special education needs that were not being met at the school and intended to return to the local public school during the next school year.

In fact, there were several issues of concern at this school. In addition to issues about safety, grades, and lack of special education support, there were concerns about inadequate communication, elitism and school governance. The administration, teachers, parents, and students all mentioned lack of communication at all levels as a prevalent issue and the school is taking steps to improve it.

The staff reported that the school philosophy is perceived as elitist by many in the greater community of Coeur d’Alene. “Working hard” was cited as the only criteria necessary to succeed at this school, but those not willing to “work hard enough” to meet the academic expectations are expected to fail and leave the school. During the first year, 20 percent have made the choice to leave. Parents reported that the school’s “sink or swim” approach towards failing students was to “not waste resources” on the small group that drops out, but to focus on the students willing to work hard to succeed. Some parents, however, felt that there was no response to ensure the success of students enrolled and that the school did not provide enough support for all students to adjust.

The final concern was in the area of school governance. One parent felt the method of selection and term for the board of trustees was inappropriate. Teachers pointed out that this parent’s perception of the process was inaccurate. This may be an example of the miscommunication reported earlier.

The relationship with the district is reported to be very strained. Charter school staff and parents believe that the charter school is not seen as an asset to the district and that the

district would prefer to see the charter school fail. While some teachers would prefer a closer relationship with the district, the administrator would favor a complete separation from the district and believes in the need to bring in competition to the public education system. Similarly, a teacher felt that the public schools system currently preserves poor teaching and would prefer to see stronger accountability measures in the district. Teachers at the charter school do feel that schools should be accountable and viewed the fact that charter schools can be closed as a positive attribute that can help to ensure accountability. However, since the district is perceived to be oppositional, parents and staff alike feel that evaluation and oversight of the charter school by the district is a mistake. They feel there should be an independent agency that monitors process and outcomes.

Those involved with the school feel they have already impacted the district. For example, Latin is now being required in the 7th grade and advanced placement English classes are now offered at the district in response to the similar charter school classes. The district is discussing the possibility of uniforms, and the district pays \$400 towards dual enrollment. Charter school staff hope that charter school movement impacts all public schools and believes many of the innovations in their charter school are transferable, but also feels there is much resistance to overcome before this can happen.

While parents, teachers, and students all expressed some concerns regarding specific issues, there was generally strong support for the idea of charter schools. There was concern that charter schools are not well understood and that the public often mistakes charter schools for private schools. Finally, there existed the awareness that Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy does not meet the needs of all students; many felt that there should be more types of charters available, possibly directed towards specific students or curriculum.

LOST RIVERS CHARTER SCHOOL

Lost Rivers Charter School is a converted alternative school in the small town of Arco. It is located in a doublewide mobile home on a large lot just down the street from the local high school. The school has a home-like feel. In the living room visitors find a comfortable couch, bookshelves, and a cubicle for the school secretary. The dining room has three student computer stations. The two back bedrooms are used as teacher offices and learning spaces for the students. A large room with about six chairs, a long table, and a couple of whiteboards is used as the classroom. Finally, there is a shop under construction about the size of a two-car garage in front of the school that will be used for student projects. The current facility is a big improvement over the original smaller space used earlier in the year located near a road with no field.

Enrollment at Lost Rivers is typically about 10-12 students, but varies considerably as students come and go during the year. Some students decide to attend to finish-up a few credits before graduation; others may spend a good part of their high school careers at Lost Rivers. Many of the students are concurrently on probation and some attend between periods of house arrest. Each week Lost Rivers reports student attendance to the local

probation officer and occasionally police are called to deal with situations at the school. Consistent attendance is a significant challenge for many of the students.

The school operates from 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to make it easier for students to attend and also to allow a part-time administrator to come from Mackay each day at 4:00 p.m. The school is planning to transition to a year-round schedule beginning in July or August of this year and would like to secure funding for a full time administrator and teacher's aide. The curriculum is delivered in multiage, interdisciplinary, project-based lessons. The one full-time teacher is very dedicated, caring and works to develop positive relationships with the students. Although the students' behavior is not always ideal for a school environment, they do seem to return the trust and respect that she gives them. The teacher works hard to "make everything meaningful" and teach the students "what's appropriate in society." There is a focus on reading, writing, math, biology (although there are not enough books for each student to use the same biology text), and computer skills. The students grow plants, work on motorcycles, write articles for the local newspaper, and do community service projects.

Five students attended school on a vacation day to take part in the small group interview. The students were relaxed and seemed to enjoy being at the school. They felt very comfortable at Lost Rivers and noted that they liked the school because they "don't get nagged at" other than by their fellow students. The students had a wide range of academic and social skills. They said that they did get bored at times, but generally enjoyed the freedom to go at their own pace, to eat and to take breaks as needed. They also liked that their efforts were graded and counted as well as their accomplishments. In fact, the students like the school so much that some have climbed in through a window at night to play computer games and eat food. Recent efforts to check windows left open by students have reduced the late-night break-ins.

With a few notable exceptions, the parents of these students are not very involved with the school. Many are dealing with their own drug, alcohol or other issues. One student was expelled for missing too many classes because her mother required her to stay home and care for younger siblings. In efforts to make better connections with parents the teacher made phone calls to each student's home and sent a five-page letter home with the most recent grade reports to remind parents of school policies.

The board consists of the part-time administrator, the teacher, community members and parents. This year the board dealt with some internal "power plays" and some members may have "conflicts of interest." Some of the original board members will be leaving their positions at the end of the current school year. Over the summer the board plans to fill the vacant positions with new members.

Lost Rivers appears to have a good relationship with the local school district. They plan to meet once a year to discuss if the school is living up to its charter. During the school year they stay well connected to the district and keep communication open. As a charter school, they have more freedom than they did as an alternative school. The district was supportive of converting to a charter school, partly because the district is responsible for

less record keeping if a school is a charter school than an alternative school. Because of the small number of students attending the charter school the financial impact of Lost Rivers on the district has not been great. If anything the charter school has brought additional resources to the community through the federal charter school grant they received this year. However, the school district may not realize that they need to pass along percentages of other federal funds to the charter school.

Future plans at Lost Rivers include building a greenhouse, finishing the shop, planting trees for a windbreak, and constructing a basketball court. Also, there are plans to increase parent involvement by offering students the use of computers in the evenings with parent supervision. Lost Rivers is a unique school that offers an educational alternative for secondary students in this community.

MERIDIAN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Meridian Charter High School (MCHS) is located in a beautiful new building adjacent to a large field. The school was finally able to move into the site after beginning the school year in a church. The feeling that permeates the school is one of excitement, yet it is relatively quiet and orderly. The school is currently serving the ninth and tenth grades. It plans to add the eleventh and twelfth grades, one grade per year over the next two years.

The school provides an integrated curriculum and block scheduling. Much of the curriculum is “hands-on” and promotes student involvement and critical thinking. The school’s main draw for students is its technology focus. Once students become juniors, they pick one of four technology specializations: networking, programming, graphic design, or electronics. Career exploration is a major intent of the structure. Juniors have the opportunity to job shadow and seniors have the opportunity for internships. In addition, students are taught interpersonal skills, such as communications, table manners, event planning and professional development skills. Student involvement has been highly valued as the school develops during its first year of operation. Students helped with building design and furniture blueprints. They also participate in school government.

Students appreciate the small school community. MCHS plans a total enrollment of 200 students (though it is currently at 114 since it only has two grades). During our interviews, many stated that they felt lost at the bigger public high schools where enrollment is in the thousands of students. The students also appreciated the individualized attention that they receive at the school. Most class sizes are small, and those that are larger have two teachers per room. Students said teachers motivated them by offering activities that require high levels of involvement on the students’ part. Students felt they were treated like young adults rather than like kids. There is a feeling of freedom accompanied by an expectation of responsibility for oneself. Students also reported feeling relatively secure at the charter school.

The student population is diverse; some of its students are at-risk while others are very accomplished academically. In order to be successful at MCHS, a student must turn in quality work on time. Each Friday, students receive a printout of their week’s

accomplishments, which also tells them if they are missing any work. Students may turn in any late work at that point, and those whose work is completed are rewarded by being allowed to leave early that afternoon.

Students are not allowed to fail. Those not performing at a minimum level must redo their work, and they receive a “work in progress (WIP)” until the work is completed to standard. A minimum level of achievement is a 74 percent (a low “C”) on work, and students must be able to show that they have an understanding of what they have learned. Students who do not do well have to take summer school classes at their parents’ expense, though there are funds available to assist those students whose parents are unable or refuse to pay. The discipline policy is consistent, and student may only miss 60 hours of class per year, which includes tardies, illness, trips, bereavements and appointments. Some students have been expelled for failure to fully participate in the program.

The teachers at MCHS stated that they were very happy to be at teaching at the school because of the instructional freedom they have because of block scheduling and integration of curriculum. They feel they are treated more professionally than at the conventional schools from which they came because they have input with curriculum design. They also feel that the students are better served because of the competency-based model at MCHS versus strictly counting seat hours as is the common practice at most other public schools. The smaller size of the school also facilitates collaboration and communication among the teachers. When asked about the transferability of the program to more conventional public schools, the teachers felt that it would be difficult for several reasons. The lack of cohesive vision and larger size at the other schools were viewed as major barriers. Teachers stated that it is difficult to get a large faculty to all “buy in” to the same program. Teachers agreed that good leadership at the conventional public schools will be key in affecting change there.

Despite the praise for the school, teachers stated that it was not an easy decision to come there to teach after being in the conventional public schools. Teachers who do so are walking away from their district benefits, such as tenure. Also, there is the perception among some teachers in other schools, and in the community in general, that the school is solely for at-risk students. The charter school teachers thought this was probably because of the pride at the conventional public schools: “If a student is leaving us, it’s probably because they’re at risk.”

Parents who were interviewed during the visit said they were very happy with the charter school. Regarding previous experience with and perceptions of the conventional public schools, one parent summed things up by stating that “things were fine there but they’re better here.” Many parents home schooled their children before coming to the charter school, so their level of involvement tends to be high. Some parents mentioned that they would like to see a placement exam for students coming in so they will be put into classes where they fit. Some students also reflected this concern, specifically that the technology courses were not segregated into ability levels. A few students with advanced levels of technological knowledge felt cheated that the program was not living up to their high

expectations. Both students and parents mentioned the lack of team sports, band, non-tech electives and foreign language as an issue. Many charter students do participate in sports at the conventional public school, but it is difficult for some students to get there on time because of scheduling conflicts. There are plans to offer foreign language next year as an after school program. Arrangements are also being made with Boise State University to offer dual enrollment so that students can earn college credit while finishing high school.

MCHS strives to have positive relationships with the greater community of Meridian and the surrounding areas. The school has established relationships with over 20 local businesses for its job-shadowing program next year. The school also has an active public relations campaign to target potential students. Staff from the charter school goes to all of the 8th grade classes in the district to describe what MCHS is all about. Students write articles for local newspapers, and they write welcome letters to the next year's incoming students.

The charter school's relationship with its district is one of the best in Idaho. The original leadership for the charter school occurred at the district level. District teachers designed the charter school concept, and two stayed on to actually start the school. The building was built by the district. The property was originally intended to house seven different technology schools. The current idea is for the property to house six different charter schools with varying emphases. The district assists the school in several other ways: landscaping, transportation, special education, and accounting. While the relationship is amiable, there is still the idea that money is being taken away from district.

However, the charter school students have become a valuable "product" to the district. The district sees the charter school as teaching students how to help them with their technology. The district has even hired some of the students to assist them with networking challenges.

MOSCOW CHARTER SCHOOL

Moscow Charter School opened in August of 1998 and is the only Idaho charter school in its second year of operation. The executive director had prior experience directing a pre-school located at the same site and started the charter school along with a group of parents. As expected for start-up schools, the first year was challenging, but staff and parents feel things have smoothed out and they have exceeded their developmental expectations. The school serves 63

K-6 students and has a waiting list of 40. Staff commented that the size of the waiting list says a lot about people in the community wanting educational options for their children.

The school is currently housed in a temporary church facility shared with a pre-school program. The preschool is located on the main floor and the Moscow Charter School is in the basement floor of the church. Classrooms are located along both sides of a long hallway with separate rooms for the school library, art center, computer room, and a large room for martial arts classes. A large, fenced grassy area is available for use as a

playground. While space is not abundant, there is a room for a separate administrative office. Parents did mention their desire for a better facility, an indoor play area, and playground equipment; staff added the need for larger classroom spaces.

The instructional program is an enrichment program that includes age-appropriate experiences in theatre, music, dance, art, Spanish, martial arts, and environmental education. The enrichment experiences are provided by seven specialists while basic education is provided by regular classroom teachers. There is also an emphasis on technology, including both skill-building components as well as a focus on problem solving using technology as the tool. The curriculum is thematic and flexible multiage groupings are used. Students advance to the next grade when they are ready. The educational program also includes character instruction, core knowledge, foreign language at all grades, a hands-on approach, the use of Individual Educational Plans, multiple intelligences, and project based curriculum.

There is a strong emphasis on community relations. The charter school operates as a practicum site for the University of Idaho and is developing a cooperative plan with the Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute for expanded environmental education and to develop new models to teach environmental concepts using a project based hands-on approach. The focus on arts leads to school participation in Moscow Community Renaissance Fair by providing theater and music entertainment for the participants, and to hosting a major theater production written and produced by students and faculty that is presented at the University of Idaho.

Class sizes at Moscow Charter School are very small; the student/teacher ratio is 15 to 1 and the student/adult ratio is 13 to 1. Parents appreciate the small class size, accessibility of teachers, and individual attention possible in a small school. They feel their children receive special help when needed, no matter their grade or level. They feel that this environment enables teachers to adjust to each child at the pace needed. They feel their children are challenged and stimulated and parents appreciate the holistic, thematic approach to learning. Teachers value the focus on arts and the flexibility of this school program, mentioning for example, that children aren't locked into grade level and that some children are home schooled part of the day or just come for the martial arts class.

Parents and staff also reported several additional benefits to small school and class size. Parents feel confident that the administrators and teachers "know what's going on" and that issues are dealt with until they are solved. When parents drive (parents living beyond a one-mile radius boundary of the school must provide their own transportation), they are encouraged to drop-off and pick-up their children inside the school, facilitating communication between parents and teachers. Consequently, parents feel their children are safer here than at other public schools and both teachers and parents value the "family environment" and climate of respect.

Teachers believe a number of charter school features could be implemented in conventional public schools including the enrichment curriculum, approach to technology, and emphasis on the arts. However, teachers suspect that public schools often

do not have the shared vision and common language throughout the school need for real school change and they worry that public schools tend to end up doing what works for the majority of children, leaving others to “fall through the cracks.”

The relationship with the district and funding issues are both areas of concern for school staff and parents. Charter schools are often seen as a threat to the district and they are often not well understood. The charter school would prefer more district support in areas such as transportation and other services. Special education is a specific worry as the financial needs of certain special education children could conceivably bankrupt a charter school. The unclear relationship of districts and charter schools has caused confusion. For example, is the charter school a Local Education Agency (LEA) or a school within an LEA? If they are part of an LEA, why are there no special education funds and why is transportation such an issue?

Moscow Charter School staff and parents would like to see more “good” charter schools in Idaho so that parents have more choices, but emphasize the need to be selective. They stress the need for an independent oversight agency, and suggest a person at the state level. They would like to encourage plenty of time devoted to evaluation but feel district evaluation of charter schools is a poor choice.

NAMPA CHARTER SCHOOL

Nampa Charter School is currently situated in several portable classrooms that are located on the property of a church. The portables are arranged in an L-shape that opens onto a grassy play area. Each classroom is multigrade, with two grades per room. Music and physical education classes are held in the church. Space is not abundant; the secretary's office is in one side of the seventh grade classroom. The school is in operation year-round and the calendar and schedule can be adjusted to fit parent requests.

One of the greatest strengths of the school, and something that makes it different than conventional public schools, is its emphasis on character development. Parents are involved in shaping that curriculum and the principal has taken a no-nonsense approach to behavior and has clearly outlined expectations and consequences. The school community is small enough so that everyone, adults and children alike, know each other. Students and their parents feel safe. The anonymity that exists at many conventional public schools does not exist here. Above all, the expectation is that kids come to the school to learn.

All teachers utilize essentially the same variety of instructional programs. The instruction is primarily oral in nature, with relatively little use of paper. (In fact, limited use of paper positively impacts the school's budget.) Students participate in Daily Oral Language/Science/Social Studies. A daily "buffet" of Shurley math and grammar focuses students on basic skills. Students chant in unison as they go through the problems that are written in advance on a whiteboard. It is highly structured and repetitive in that the sequence of activities does not change much; only the problems themselves change. Problems increase in difficulty through the course of the year as students become ready

for more challenging material. These methods have resulted in high standardized test scores while still adhering to the state standards and curriculum guidelines of the district. However, the program has been criticized by visitors from the conventional public schools for being too strict and militaristic.

Despite the criticism, teachers and the principal advocate their methods as an effective way to include and to teach all students. While such instruction is methodical, teachers adjust the pace according to the readiness of their students. There is some room for creativity, and students, especially in the older grades, create skits around their lessons. Students are engaged, and they speak highly of the program, including the grammar instruction which they say helps them with their Spanish. The teachers believe the program will continue to be successful because of the high degree of instructional consistency between and among classrooms.

Teachers are well paid at Nampa Charter School, enabling the school to select quality teachers. One parent observed that “charter schools make good teachers excellent.” The consistency and cohesiveness, along with strong and supportive leadership, are the primary reasons teachers chose to come to the school. Teachers reported that they have more preparation time than in other schools and they have taped and observed each other in order to unify their teaching styles and concepts. The positive climate is reflected in one teacher’s comment that “it’s nice to be around happy people.” Consistency of philosophy and teaching style appear to be the main barriers to replication of the charter school’s program in the conventional public schools. Teachers noted that there is rarely a unifying mission in the other public schools but believe that is what it takes to achieve the greatest success. Replication of such a program is possible; the school’s charter is heavily modeled after an existing charter school in California.

While the overall enthusiasm for the school is very high, there are several concerns. Transportation has been a challenge for some families. At present, only 50 percent of students can come by bus because of funding issues. The school hopes to boost this number to 100 percent.

There is the perception around Nampa that the charter school is elitist. However, teachers and the principal insist this is not the case. Students of every ability level come to the school. A few children, those with severe learning needs, receive instruction from the special education teacher. Most children with learning disabilities are integrated into the regular classroom. Because of the instruction methods, nearly all children are able to keep pace. Several students mentioned that they feel more academically challenged in this school and many students said they get the individual help they need to succeed. They also appreciated the instructional consistency. Staff felt that the small school size enabled them to provide coordinated, consistent, and immediate responses and help for troubled students who would not be adequately or appropriately helped in a larger school setting.

When asked what they missed about their previous school, several parents expressed concern over the larger class sizes at the charter school. However, most felt that the issue

was outweighed by the smaller overall school size. Parents feel welcome and are involved. Parents noted that, unlike their experiences at other schools, about one third of the PTA members were men. The demand to get into the school is so great (the wait list is greater than actual enrollment) that the principal is considering expanding to two schools under the charter.

The relationship that the school has with the district is difficult, since the district is not very excited about having charter schools in its midst. The charter school staff feel that the school is being micro-managed by the district, because the school is accountable to the district. Staff would prefer to be accountable to the state. Some staff also suggested they would like to see more legislation to encourage the charter school start-up process by funding founders during a yearlong pre-operational planning phase.

POCATELLO COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

Pocatello Community Charter School (PCCS) is located in a former office area at the back of a 1970s style shopping mall. Initially, the school was located in another office space and moved about half way through the school year. Although the move was completed quickly, it was an involved process, and somewhat difficult for the school. However, the new location is preferable and offers a spacious and comfortable environment for both staff and students. PCCS has recently obtained a field across from the parking lot as well, which was transformed from a dirt lot to a sodded, fenced, and irrigated playground by parents, teachers and school board members in one weekend.

PCCS enrolls 120 students in kindergarten through sixth grade. There are plans to add seventh grade in the fall of 2000 and eighth grade in the fall of 2001. The classroom configuration is multigrade with the exception of kindergarten, which has its own class. Each class is limited to 20 students. The main curriculum is Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) which is utilized to varying degrees throughout the school. Both the multigrade grouping and the use of ELOB are strongly supported by staff and parents, but they have also presented some challenges. Teachers will be receiving much-needed training through the summer and into next school year on how to instruct multigrade classes and how to implement ELOB effectively. This year PCCS has also contracted with an experienced consultant to assist the teachers in implementing and utilizing ELOB.

The students seem excited to be at PCCS and are willing to share what they are learning in their classes. Parents are enthusiastic as well about what their children are experiencing at the school. There is a high level of parental involvement, which has been a key factor in the school getting up and running successfully. Parent committees have a high level of responsibility and authority at the school. They are involved with hiring decisions, recommending school policies, assisting with curriculum selection, organizing activities and field trips, developing a hot lunch program, and writing grants for the school. Parents worked with the school board to develop a technology plan and then wire and network the school. Now there are computers in each classroom and the library. The nine parents who attended the small group interview especially appreciate the strong sense of

community at PCCS, the hands-on learning, student uniforms, and the small class sizes. They are concerned about knowing how their children are doing academically and whether they are learning at a similar pace as they would be in the regular public school. There is also some concern among parents regarding the school remaining true to its charter and needing more organization in terms of curriculum, instruction, and leadership.

Leadership has been a challenge through the first year of operation for many involved with the school, and this is seemingly due to the lack of clearly defined roles. There is a board, a dean, parents, and teachers who all fill various and somewhat overlapping roles. At times it is unclear who is really responsible for certain aspects of the school's functioning. The current dean is leaving at the end of the school year and will be replaced for the next year. There is also a strong interest in the upcoming school board elections. There are six candidates for three open positions. PCCS will also be increasing the number of teachers on the seven-member board from one to two. Having a year of experience along with new leadership will hopefully help PCCS smooth out the leadership issues and move ahead in the coming year.

The PCCS teachers expressed much satisfaction with the development of the school over the past year. They feel it has improved tremendously since opening and will continue in this positive direction. For the most part, teachers are excited to be working with ELOB and in multi-grade classes. They look forward to additional training to help them work in both these areas more effectively. They appreciate the amount of freedom they have with what and how to teach and to have such a great amount of parent and community involvement. This year they worked with the board chair to develop a system for teacher evaluation and performance reviews. They are concerned about the amount of extra work they have had to take on during the first year, but are hopeful this will decrease in the coming year.

The district is sensitive to PCCS and what is happening there. As with many charter schools, districts are interested in what may be working at the school while also being overly skeptical of it. The smaller class size and multi-grade configuration of PCCS (and another elementary school in the district) have attracted some attention and caused some discussion district-wide. PCCS also has school uniforms which is another issue being discussed more broadly, at the state level. While school uniforms are controversial in the larger community, the students, teachers, and parents are quick to point out the benefits of having school uniforms. In fact, at PCCS even the teachers wear the school uniforms. So, certain practices from PCCS may have an impact on the larger system in the future.

PCCS has been proactive in facing challenges during the first year that has resulted in positive outcomes for the school. Many charter schools face facility, curriculum, and leadership issues but do not deal with them in such a proactive fashion. For example, school leaders are conducting a long term planning session during the summer to lay out the future direction of PCCS. This will help PCCS clarify their vision even more fully and take the next step to its fulfillment.

RENAISSANCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Renaissance Charter School is located in Moscow in three portable classroom buildings on a residential lot. Renaissance currently enrolls 72 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The school offers dual enrollment for students who are home schooled, attend a regular public school, or the local university.

The small class sizes, enriched curriculum, and the individual nature of student learning are the main factors that attracted parents, students, and teachers to the school. The teachers feel that the school offers more opportunities for the students in terms of curriculum, and the teachers are also able to give the students individual attention. Most parents feel that their children are being challenged and stimulated by the educational program. Some parents brought their children to Renaissance because of the individual and project-based learning and, because their children were “falling through the cracks” at the regular public school.

The educational program includes an emphasis on arts including regular and systematic music instruction utilizing the Suzuki approach, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB), multiple intelligence theory, and multigrade classrooms in order to provide a more holistic approach to education than in previous public schools. Students are grouped into multigrade classrooms where they are able to interact and learn from their peers. The teachers believe there is more stability with a multigrade setting because students are able to get the individual attention they need. However, some students believe that they are not being challenged because the curriculum is designed for the lower grades. For example, eighth graders do not feel challenged because the work is primarily geared toward the sixth and seventh graders. With regard to ELOB, some teachers have fully incorporated the model while others have not. Teachers believe there needs to be more professional development opportunities in order to implement the model effectively.

Students feel that the school offers a safe environment, less pressure from peers, more personal attention, and the teachers are approachable. Students also feel they need more space for classrooms and sports, more challenging work for the upper grades in the multigrade setting, and would like more teachers for different classes. Students mentioned that some staff did not keep promises to increase learning outside of the classroom. They expressed an awareness and understanding of the lack of funding for these activities. In general, students miss their friends from previous schools and would like to see more extracurricular activities.

Teachers, parents, and administration mentioned that the school attracts students with special needs, particularly high school students. Parents expressed their concern about some high school students being poor role models for their young children and the need for a more specialized program and additional staff to help those individuals. The school is in the process of working on clearly defining its discipline policy in order to take a more proactive approach to working with the students. Overall, parents feel that Renaissance does not avoid behavior problems; rather they try to promote and emphasize good citizenship.

Even though parent involvement is not required, the will to establish and promote involvement is present. There has been an expressed need for better coordination and dedication from both parents and administration. Parents would like to have their roles more clearly defined in order to help facilitate more effective volunteer time. Parents often describe the involvement issue as an evolving piece of the school. A parent education meeting is set to occur next fall to educate parents on the school curriculum, services of the school, and other informational issues affecting their children. Teachers reported that parent involvement has been successful due to their assistance in the classroom, field trips, and various committees. Also, technology has allowed teachers to send messages via e-mail to parents concerning their child's education and this has increased parent involvement.

Currently, Renaissance does not have a principal though it is advertising for the position. One of the founders is on site daily as an administrator and teacher, although initially the administrative role was intended for the principal. The loss of their previous principal has greatly affected the teachers, parents, and students and remains a challenge. There has been an expressed need for a full time principal/director with strong leadership skills to get the school running smoothly. The district, as well as the parents and staff, are assisting in this process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

What is the current status of the Idaho Charter School Program? To answer this question, we will examine the three guiding questions of this evaluation as well as the intent of the Idaho charter school law.

1. Did the charter schools accomplish what they proposed, based on their mission and goals?

Schools are definitely making progress toward their goals, which is laudable in what is the first year of development for most. According to the individual school profiles, approximately two-thirds of the goals were met or exceeded. According to parent and teacher surveys, schools are meeting or exceeding their stated missions. The goals are primarily student centered, though some addressed parent involvement, curriculum, stable enrollment, and community satisfaction. Not all goals must be met within the first year or two of operation. More information will be available as charter schools become more established with time.

2. Did their students meet the achievement levels proposed in their charter school applications?

The second question addresses the first intent of the charter law, “to improve student learning.” Twenty-nine of the 34 goals established by schools were related to student achievement. Of those 29, nearly half were described as having been met or exceeded. Two schools did not report on their levels of accomplishment toward meeting their goals. Several other goals were not applicable or not addressed because test data was not yet available at the time of reporting. “Increased learning” could not be shown since this is a baseline year for most schools.

Nine of the student achievement goals were stated as measurable by standardized test data, grades, or grade level. It is very clear when those goals have been met. However, levels of accomplishment were much more difficult to determine on goals that were not overtly quantifiable. For example, some student achievement was determined through portfolios, teacher input, and implementation of certain curriculum. With such sources as means to determine success, it is difficult to say with certainty that the goals have been met. Most schools with such goals did not provide specific information regarding how portfolio assessment was accomplished. This is not to suggest that student achievement goals be measurable only with standardized test data or grades. Rather, there is room for improvement on measurability, or at least the reporting process, of non-standardized student achievement. This will ensure greater reliability and validity of reported achievement.

On surveys, teachers rated their level of satisfaction with student academic performance very highly. It is interesting to consider what this might say about the schools’ respective student populations, levels of parent involvement and expectations, and ultimately about any self-selectivity that is likely occurring within charter schools in general. Thus, student achievement is likely a function not only of what the charter schools are doing, but of pre-existing conditions as well.

3. What makes charter schools in Idaho unique?

Shared philosophy and small size are two factors that make Idaho charter schools unique compared to their conventional counterparts. Each school has a mission that states its unique intent of offering a particular instructional or thematic focus school-wide. One area of intent of the charter law is to “include the use of different and innovative teaching methods.” As mentioned in the characteristics section of this report, most of the programs are not unique in and of themselves. For example, individualized educational plans (IEPs) can be found in conventional public schools across the country. However, the charter schools have implemented the programs school-wide. These programs include Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB), rigorous college preparatory courses, technology focus, and arts and music focus. All but one of the schools organize students in multigrade configurations. As more schools are established, there will be an “increase [in] learning opportunities for all students with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students” as is one intent of the charter law. Charter schools teachers reported that they received greater amounts of preparation time for their programs than they had received in conventional public schools.

One of the most unique features of charter schools relative to their conventional counterparts is their ability to determine the maximum number of students that they will serve in a given year. Five of the schools have waiting lists, and one of those is considering opening another school under its charter in order to serve the additional students knocking on its doors.

Parents and staff described their schools as familial, which they say is something lacking in conventional public schools because of their larger size. The result of having smaller schools is a creation of learning communities that are centered around their own particular interests. The creation of such climates is rare in the conventional public school realm, but seemingly not in charter schools. Parents tend to be much more involved at charter schools. There is also more on-site involvement by fathers. It is interesting to note that schools noted (on surveys) high levels of involvement as both a strength and a weakness, since parent over-involvement leads to a “too many cooks” situation. If leadership becomes distributed among too many individuals, the mission of the school becomes diluted and thus unclear or vague to the school community at large.

Charter schools have the unique opportunity to vary their schedules from the traditional school calendar year and from the 8-to-3-o’clock daily schedule. However, only two schools have modified their schedules to any notable extent. One charter school (Nampa) has adjusted its calendar to be year-round and varied the times when vacations occur. Lost Rivers has adjusted its daily schedule; students arriving late morning and staying until early evening.

Additional conclusions

The state charter law puts forth two additional intentions that are not addressed above: professional development opportunities and expanded school choice. The state charter law intended the schools to “create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.” While the implementation of the charter is a development opportunity in and of itself for teachers, formal professional development is often put aside for more pressing situations (e.g., teaching!). First year charter schools are often operating in a more reactive than proactive mode. Lack of sufficient funding is also a barrier. Because there are so many issues to work through, not all issues can be addressed at once. For the three schools that are implementing ELOB school-wide, for example, the need for training has been particularly great.

In addition to technical assistance needs expressed on page 26, teachers mentioned the desire for a state level charter resource center or association, as well as more planning time and financial support to develop and implement their programs. One school was described as opening prematurely, and that problems with lack of organization might have been headed off with more planning time. There may also be a need for professional development in the area of special education since only two of the schools have special education certified staff.

Charter schools are providing “parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available with the public school system” to a limited extent, more so in areas with greater population bases. This will increase with the creation of more charter schools and a greater array of educational programs. However, according to one parent, there is “no systematic mechanism for catching kids of parents who don’t care.” Not all students have choices because of lack of parental support.

Another issue for consideration is transportation. While some schools have successfully contracted out for transportation services, others are able to provide transportation only for a few, if any, of their students. This is a particular issue for first-year schools, since their transportation funding from the district is based on the previous year’s enrollment. In some states, such as Minnesota, transportation dollars follow the student rather than being based on a school’s enrollment.

The charter schools in Idaho that are most successful are like other successful charters in other states. Key factors that contribute to their success are:

- Low student-to-teacher ratios
- Parent involvement
- Teacher commitment and shared philosophy
- Positive relationship with sponsoring district
- Strong administrative unit

The viability and stability of the charter schools is likely a function of these factors. In addition, these are key lessons that conventional public schools can learn from the charters.

Recommendations

Measurement of Accomplishments

Some of the schools' missions and goals need to be reworked so that the progress made toward their achievement can be clearly and simply measured by external evaluators (e.g., the districts or the state). There may also be a need for training sponsoring agencies on how to assist the charter schools with measurement of their goals during the application process.

Once the Idaho state standards are implemented, schools will be able to show the extent to which their students are meeting those standards based on benchmark exam scores. Advance consideration must be given to minimum achievement thresholds, particularly for charter schools with at-risk students. If schools must attain these minimum standards for their students, then consequences for not meeting them must also be as clearly defined as the standards themselves.

Sponsoring Agency

The Idaho charter law provides that only school districts may serve as a sponsoring agency. It may be beneficial to consider allowing an alternative sponsoring agency, such as a university or state board, to ensure fairness and access to charter applicants. Given that districts vary in their support of charter schools, an alternative sponsoring agency may provide an applicant with another opportunity to be chartered and to receive greater support once the school is in operation. This will also allay any later conflict of interest regarding the charter school accountability issue.

State and District Support of Charter Schools

The Idaho charter schools would like to see more funding (e.g., for technology) distributed directly to the schools. At present, they are generally denied most additional funds from their districts. The districts can be highly selective, or even exclusionary, in distributing funds based on need. However, the charter schools also need this financial support in order to implement their programs successfully. Facilities are also a major issue for charter schools who do not have adequate district support. Some charter schools have suggested government loans for schools to obtain better facilities; these loans would secure the buildings themselves as collateral.

Equity Issues

The State must ensure that charter school enrollment is reflective of district demographics in terms of ethnic composition, free/reduced lunch eligibility, and special needs. Encouraging schools to recruit and to serve a wide range of students adequately will support the purpose of Idaho's educational system.

Public Awareness of Charter Schools

More Idaho residents need to be made aware of the option of charter schools. It is not widely understood that charter schools are public schools and open to all students. Many people believe that charter schools are private, tuition-based schools. Even some parents of charter school students see the schools as "better than public schools," which conveys

a perception of privateness. The more information that is available, the more understanding there will be regarding this educational reform effort. If more parents realize that charter schools are free and open to their children, such awareness may positively affect the issue of selectivity. It may also increase competition among all schools. Districts need to be more familiar with charter schools and legislation as well.

The charter schools can also do more in increasing awareness of their existence. More active public relations campaigns and even simple things like improved signage for the schools will go a long way in promoting charters.

These preliminary conclusions warrant further and continued study. The second year study will reexamine these issues as it charts the progress of Idaho's charter schools. It will also include more information from the sponsoring districts regarding their perspectives of their charter schools and their impact on the entire system (both programmatically and financially).

As the Idaho Charter School Program continues to evolve and grow, careful attention must be given to it so that the schools include the best interests of all students in Idaho's public education system. Other states with more mature programs, such as Colorado, California, or Arizona, can provide information on what may or may not work for Idaho and for the program's future.

Appendix A:

Individual School Profiles

ANSER Charter School

Sponsoring District: Independent School District of Boise City

LOCATION: Boise	OPENING DATE: September 7, 1999
GRADE LEVELS: K-6	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 20:1 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 15:1
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Open enrollment	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: Multiage	
FACILITY: Proposed location within the Boise City Limits and occupy commercial space in its initial years. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Total Sq. Ft: 5600	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 3% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 6% Black: 1% Special needs: 10% Hispanic: 1% LEP: 0% Native Am: 0% Title I: N/A White: 95% Children of organizers: 7%	
MISSION: To educate the whole child in a collaborative learning environment where individuals are inspired to be self-motivated and to feel a sense of connection and responsibility to the world. This school is committed to fostering learning that imagines a better world and works toward realizing it; promoting within each child autonomy, creativity and the ability to collaborate; embracing the diversity that surrounds us; growth through discovery, reflection and balance; and the use of developmentally appropriate practices and real-world experiences to educate. ANSER will serve as a leadership catalyst and ambassador for educational improvement and teacher development that recognizes, supports and advances effective educational practices.	
COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Boise State University: P.E. Department Ed. Department	

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Block Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On/Expeditionary learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Education Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program: Expeditionary Learning, Multiage/Grade (3 levels) 1-2-3; 4-5-6 Swimming			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Science Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes: Reporting only. Except Idaho Reading Indicator as prescribed by law students are provided services.				

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

No data submitted.

PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Performance at or above the district level of proficiency on Idaho Direct writing/Math. 	Exceeded <div>Met</div> Partially Met Did Not Address	Actual Scores
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ ITBS scores will be at or above the district average in all subject areas schoolwide. 	<div>Exceeded</div> Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Actual Scores

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position		E=Elected A=Appointed	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
	Board of Directors	P	1 yr.		A	Supervise budgetary development
		P	1 yr.		A	Monitor expenditures
		P	1 yr.		A	Prepare manual budgets
		CM	1 yr.		A	
		S	2 yr.		A	
		S	3 yr.		A	
		S	3 yr.			
		Title	Length of time in current position		Also teaches in classroom	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
	Administration	Executive Director	1 yr.		No	<i>Not stated.</i>
		Name	# Parents	# Staff	# CM	<i>Responsibilities of each committee</i>
	Committees	Standing Teams	20	3	2	Ensuring charter maintains the highest levels of excellence and incorporates the latest research based strategies in its educational program.
		Temporary Teams				Project specific team, disbanded following completion of tasks.
		Advisory Board	12	0	2	Advising Team ANSER in fulfilling its charter obligations as well as any other issues related to school operations.
		Parent Council	5	0	0	
		Student Council				Three to five students coordinate implementation of ANSERS enrichment program and oversee design of enrichment activities with support from Team ANSER.

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$5,313
Operating Budget	\$595,036
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Audit	<p>Date: August, 2000</p> <p>Auditor: <i>Not stated</i></p> <p>Shared With: <i>Not stated</i></p>
Long-Term Debt	\$250,000.00 As Of 8/30/99
Short-Term Debt	\$0
OTHER OUTCOMES	
Student Attendance Rate	<i>Not stated</i>
Student Enrollment	<p>Total: 112</p> <p>Waiting List: 270+</p>
Number Of Students Leaving After Beginning of the School Year	<p>#: 6</p> <p>Reasons For Leaving:</p> <p>2: Moved</p> <p>4: Uncertainty about meeting child's needs</p>

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Staff Development Opportunities	Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 5 # PT: .5 # Certified: 5.5 Avg. Teaching Experience: 18 Years # with MA Degree: 4 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0
Number of Departing Staff	#: <i>Not stated</i>
Parent Involvement	Hours: 5,000+ on Feb. 15, 2000 Types Of Involvement: Start-Up Committees Ongoing Committees Fundraising
Other Volunteers	8,000+ Total Hours/Year 5,000 Classroom Hours/Year <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy

Sponsoring District: Coeur d'Alene

LOCATION: Coeur d'Alene	OPENING DATE: September 1999
GRADE LEVELS (for each year of operation): 1999/2000: 7 - 10	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 13.3 :1 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 9 : 1
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Open to all children, on a space available basis within each grade. Will not discriminate. Preference will be given to those students who reside within the attendance area of the charter. If there are more eligible applicants than space available, the school will conduct a lottery to determine who will be admitted. A drawing of names by grade will be held until all spaces are filled, with preference given to siblings of admitted students. Once all spaces are filled the drawing will continue to establish a waiting list.	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: college prep	
FACILITY: 5-year-old steel building, former Pet and Garden center. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary (Not sure)	
STUDENT PROFILE: <i>The school stated that they are "not interested" in student demographic data.</i>	
MISSION: It shall be the mission of the Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy to prepare young men and women for successful adulthood through rigorous, content rich, academic education. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy will graduate responsible citizens who possess the ability to compete internationally. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy exists in order to promote and implement academic excellence in our student body. Further, we seek to insure that our graduates are knowledgeable and proficient users of language so that they may; succeed in school, participate in our democracy, find challenging work, appreciate and contribute to our culture, and pursue their own goals and interests as independent learners throughout their lives.	
COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Member of Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce, made presentations about the school to local civic groups, local media has publicized several articles on the school, and looking to partner with local groups to rent a facility for training and to provide special interests events, speakers, and classes.	

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Block Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Education Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Portfolio Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	College Prep	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program: College prep, rigorous academics, direct instruction, teacher centered			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Science Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stanford Diagnostic Tests	<input type="checkbox"/>
			STAR reading tests	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes: The group data is used to confirm undefined properties of success, lack of progress or failure.			

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

Subject Area	Grade Level	Mean Grade	Standard Deviation	Correlation	
English	7	7.9 B	2.6	Eng/Math	.52
	8	6.4 C+	3.4	Eng/Math	.79
	9	5.0 C	3.2	Eng/Math	-.04
	10	5.0 C	3.5	Eng/Math	.57
	Total	6.4 C+	3.3	Eng/Math	.56
Math	7	6.7 B-	2.8	Math/Sci	.48
	8	6.5 C+	3.4	Math/Sci	.51
	9	6.1 C+	2.3	Math/Sci	.56
	10	4.5 C-	2.8	Math/Sci	.75
	Total	6.2 C+	3.0	Math/Sci	.52
Science	7	4.7 C	3.8		
	8	5.2 C	4.5		
	9	6.1 C+	3.7		
	10	5.2 C	4.4		
	Total	5.2 C	4.1		
Social Studies	7	7.5 B-	3.4	Eng/SS	.53
	8	6.5 C+	3.6	Eng/SS	.84
	9	4.1 C-	2.4	Eng/SS	-.43
	10	3.6 D+	3.2	Eng/SS	.74
	Total	5.9 C+	3.6	Eng/SS	.71
French	8	7.0 B-	3.2	Eng/French	.86
	Total	5.9 C+	3.6		
Spanish	9	7.0 B-	3.5	Eng/Spanish	-.36
	10	6.1 C	4.0	Eng/Spanish	.63
	Total	6.5 C+	3.7		
Latin	7	8.0 B	3.5	Eng/Latin	.51
	Total	8.3 B	3.4		

STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
♦ To refine our student's academic skills including reading, writing, speaking and thinking and to advance their knowledge of the major disciplines of language arts, mathematics, science and history.	<i>Not stated.</i>	Grades indicating course Completion. Standardized testing Performance based testing
♦ To teach the traditions and values of past and present civilizations.	<i>Not stated.</i>	Same as above
♦ To instill an appreciation of the fine arts of music, art and drama.	<i>Not stated.</i>	Talent Show Advanced Humanities Art, Drama

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff ST=Student CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position	E=Elected A=Appointed	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
	School Board	P	1	A	<i>None stated</i>
		P	1	A	
		P	1	A	
		CM	1	A	
		CM	1	A	
		CM	1	A	
		CM	1	A	
	Frequency with which the board convenes: <i>Not stated</i>				
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
Administration	Principal	1	Yes	<i>None stated</i>	
	Committees	<i>No additional committees described.</i>			

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$4940
Operating Budget	\$989,000
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students Identified <i>No response given</i></p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p>
Audit	<p>Date: June 2000</p> <p>Auditor: Stan Wood</p> <p>Shared with: <i>Not stated</i></p>
Long-Term Debt	None stated
Short-Term Debt	<i>None stated</i>
OTHER OUTCOMES	1999-2000
Student Attendance Rate	Estimated daily: 95%
Student Enrollment	Total: 200
Number Of Students Leaving Mid-Year	<p>#: 50</p> <p>Reasons For Leaving: Not stated</p>
Graduation Rate	N/A
Dual Enrollment	None

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Staff Development Opportunities	Summer training institutes for teachers, writing workshops for English teachers, and participation in state and national conferences.
Teacher Qualifications	<p># FT: 3 # PT: 3</p> <p># Special Ed Endorsements: 0</p> <p># Non-Certified Giving Instruction: 0</p> <p>Avg. Teaching Experience: 7 Years</p> <p># with MA Degree: 3</p> <p># Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0</p>
Number of Departing Staff	<p>#: 3</p> <p>Reasons For Leaving: Artistic Differences</p>
Parent Involvement	<p>Hours: <i>None stated</i></p> <p>Types Of Involvement: Parent Volunteer Organization established. Produces a newsletter, assists with fundraising, serves on the Board of Directors, and helps with school facilities.</p>

Lost Rivers Charter School

Sponsoring District: Butte County Joint District

LOCATION: Arco	OPENING DATE: <i>Not stated</i>
GRADE LEVELS: 6-12 conversion	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 12 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 8
ADMISSIONS POLICY: In cooperation with Butte County School District, students (grades 6-12) may be transferred from an existing school or may enroll of their own free will. Should over-enrollment occur, students will be placed on a waiting list.	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: Skill level	
FACILITY: Double wide mobile home and detached garage (purchased) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 0 % Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 75% Black: 0% Special needs: 16 % Hispanic: 8% LEP: 3% Native Am: 0% Title I: 3% White: 92% Children of school organizers: 0 %	
MISSION: To take non-traditional students and teach them in non-traditional ways so they can become productive citizens in the 21 st century. Expanded learning experiences are provided by the school for students who otherwise would have little or no choice about how and where they could obtain their education. Every child is unique, and all children have differing educational needs and differing potential for which the schools must provide. Education is a means of improving both the individual and society, and different innovative teaching methods can be utilized in a charter school setting to improve individual student learning and increase learning opportunities.	
COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Students in the community are informed about the charter school through friends, family members, associates, and tentative referrals from the regular school system. Occasional ads in the local newspaper are taken out to inform other potential students of the charter school. Plans are being made to put an occasional editorial in the local newspaper, distribute brochures and other flyers at appropriate locations, and to establish a web site for the charter school.	

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Block Scheduling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Education Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Experiential learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	<p>Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program:</p> <p>The primary characteristics of the Lost Rivers Charter School include an education designed for each student's needs. Each student receives the attention and appropriate curriculum to enable him or her to become an educated member of society meeting Idaho State Exiting Standards and the accreditation standards of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. We encourage positive classroom environments. We also encourage behaviors which foster a lifelong love of learning in our students. Special provisions are made for eligible "at-risk" students to enable them to earn high school diplomas. Extensive options are also available to eligible gifted and talented students.</p>			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Science Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<p>Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes:</p> <p>Standardized tests are used to gauge the special learning needs of each individual student</p>			

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

No data submitted.

STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
♦ All students will make demonstrable, incremental improvements in the core subjects while enrolled as Lost Rivers Charter School students.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Portfolios
♦ All students will graduate from Lost Rivers Charter School with sufficiently competent skills, particularly in the areas of mathematics, reading, writing, and oral communication, to enable them to function as productive members of society.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Portfolios
♦ All students will obtain at least a “C” average, or 70%, in the basic skills of reading, mathematics, oral and written communication, study and test taking skills, and technology while enrolled at Lost River Charter School.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Portfolios
♦ All students will demonstrate improvement in logic, reasoning, and problem-solving skills.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Portfolios
♦ All students will develop an appreciation of learning which will enable them to become life-long learners. Students will also demonstrate a knowledge of good physical and emotive health habits.	Exceeded Met Needs Improvement Did Not Address	Portfolios
♦ All students will demonstrate technology competency by demonstrating proficiency in keyboarding, word processing, data-base, spreadsheets, and presentation software, as well as a knowledge of current and future technology deemed necessary in a changing world.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Student projects currently in progress

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff ST=Student CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position	E=Elected A=Appointed	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	School Board	S	1 ¾ yrs	A	Board Vice Chairman	
		S	1 ¾ yrs	A		
		S	1 ¾ yrs	A	Board Secretary/Treasurer	
		CM	1 ¾ yrs	A		
		CM	1 ¾ yrs	A		
		P	3 months	A		
	Frequency with which the board convenes: <i>Not stated</i>					
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	Administration	Administrator	1 ¾ yrs	Yes	Administration (student discipline, etc.)	
	Name	# P	# S	# ST	# CM	<i>Responsibilities of each committee</i>
Committees	<i>No additional committees described.</i>					

FINANCIAL	1998-1999	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$3,306	\$3,500
Operating Budget	\$89,267	\$89,000 (est.)
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>◆ Students Identified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>◆ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>◆ Describe how funding is utilized: <i>Not stated</i></p>	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>◆ Students Identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>◆ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>◆ Describe how funding is utilized: not receiving (used for district)</p>
Audit	Date: July 1999 Audited by: Swager & Swager Shared with: State Dept & District	Date: July-Aug 2000 Audited by: Jerry Sproul Shared with: State Dept & District
Long-Term Debt	Lost Rivers Charter School has acquired no debt.	
Short-Term Debt		
OTHER OUTCOMES	1998-1999	1999-2000
Student Attendance Rate	18.5 A.D.A	12.3 A.D.A.
Student Enrollment	Total: 27 Waiting List: 0	Total: 20 Waiting List: 0
Number Of Students Leaving Mid-Year	#: 2 Reasons For Leaving: Transfers to other schools	#: 1 Reasons For Leaving: Drop-out

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1998-1999	1999-2000
Graduation Rate	14	6 – 8 (expected)
Dual Enrollment	% In College: 0 % In District Academic: 3 Non-Acad.: 0	% In College: 0 % In District Academic: 0 Non-Acad.: 0
Staff Development Opportunities	Albertson's workshops District activities	District activities
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 1 # PT: 1 # Special Ed Endorsements: 1 # Non-Certified Giving Instruction: 0 Avg. Teaching Experience: 14 Years # with MA Degree: 2 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 1	# FT: 1 # PT: 1 # Special Ed Endorsements: 1 # Non-Certified Giving Instruction: 0 Avg. Teaching Experience: 15 Years # with MA Degree: 2 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 1
Number of Departing Staff	#: 0 Reasons For Leaving:	#: 2 Reasons For Leaving: 1 – retire (aide) 1 – job elsewhere (aide)
Parent Involvement	Hours: unsure Types Of Involvement: Volunteer (field trips, etc.)	Hours: 20+ Types Of Involvement: Parents of new students will be inserviced when they enroll their student in school. Parent volunteers will be utilized in the supervision of organized extracurricular activities.
Other Volunteers	0 Total Hours/Year <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded	10+ Total Hours/Year <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded

MERIDIAN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Sponsoring District: Meridian School District

LOCATION: Meridian	OPENING DATE: August, 1999
GRADE LEVELS: currently 9 – 10, with plans to expand through Grade 12, adding an additional grade level each year.	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 1-25 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 1-11.4
<p>ADMISSIONS POLICY:</p> <p>We will accept 50 students in each grade level. Presently the Meridian Charter High School, Inc. has ninth and tenth grade students only. Our enrollment is 114. We presently have a little over the 50 students per grade level. Next year we will accept 50 more freshmen. We will have approximately 150 students through the junior year in 2000-2001, adding another 50 students the following year. The Meridian School District patrons will be given first choice each year in the lottery. We have received more than 50 students applicants for incoming freshman. Other students will be place on a waiting list, which will also be determined by the lottery, which will be held April 12. As openings occur students from the waiting list will be able to fill any vacancies.</p>	
<p>STUDENT ORGANIZATION:</p> <p>Student Government: The students held a constitutional convention to elect their form of government. The government consists of a president and class representatives elected by the student body. The presidential candidates posted their speeches and were elected on their campaign speeches and not by a popularity contest as their names did not appear on the ballots.</p> <p>Oversite Committee: Three students are members of the Oversight Committee, which provides recommendations to the principal. Parents, teachers and the counselor are also members of the Oversight Committee.</p>	
<p>FACILITY:</p> <p>Meridian moved into a permanent 16,000 square foot building February 7, 2000. The building consists of 9 classrooms, 4 offices, a multi-purpose room, 3 workrooms, a conference room and restrooms. Three of those classrooms are computer labs.</p>	
<p>STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PaIs: 0.02% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 9.5%</p> <p>Black: 0.01% Special needs: 10%</p> <p>Hispanic: 0.01% LEP: <i>None identified</i></p> <p>Native Am: 0% Title I: <i>None identified</i></p> <p>White: 96% Children of organizers: 0%</p>	
<p>MISSION:</p> <p>The Meridian Charter High School employs the best practices and innovation of today and tomorrow to provide a quality educational experience for every student. We envision the lifelong application of learning, coupled with intelligent risk taking, to encourage participation as a productive member of this learning community and global society.</p>	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

Technical businesses in the community have provided input in the career paths chosen by the Meridian Charter High School, Inc. by serving on our Curriculum/Technology Advisory Committee. Members of this committee have helped in setting up our servers and computer infrastructure.

Our school Board has two members from the Meridian School District and three from the technical businesses in the area, Hewlett Packard, Sears Technology, and Micron. Parents of our students serve on our School Improvement Committee and our grant-writing committees. We held an open house in March for the Education Committee of the House of Representative for the State of Idaho. In March we invited parents of both our present student and prospective parents to separate Open Houses. We held a Ribbon Cutting ceremony, which was attended by the Mayor of Meridian, the Chamber of Commerce and the Meridian School District Superintendent and staff and the School Board member of both our school boards. A dinner for parents, students, and community members was held in March 2000. The guest speaker at the event was Representative Fred Tillman, speaker of the House Education Committee. Meridian Charter High School, Inc. is unique in that we work closely with businesses and the community to provide best practices for students.

Both JA. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation and the Sears Corporation have donated money and/or equipment to the school.

Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Block Scheduling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foreign Language At All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual Education Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program:</i></p> <p>The program focuses on basic education, career development, and personal goal setting, speech, work and study skills. Morning classes are integrated and taught in a block schedule. Afternoon classes are skill classes such as Careers and Personal Development, Math, English (with an emphasis on technical writing), and Computers. All students take classes in technology and fitness. In their junior year, students choose a technical focus area in graphic arts, programming, and networking and participate in job shadowing. In their senior year, students will participate in technical internships with local businesses. College credit will be articulated for students in technology with BSU. Students must pass competencies based on the State adopted standards. The grading scale was raised: A=92-100, B=83-91, C=74-82.</p>			
Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.			
Idaho Reading Indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes:</p> <p>Presently we have only freshmen and sophomore students so the specific test taking this year includes only the TAP tests for both grades. In the eleventh grade we plan to administer the direct writing and direct math test. Students will be encouraged to take the ACT and SAT tests. The Meridian School District also tests eleventh grade students in Level Testing which we will also use as we get eleventh grade students next year.</p> <p>The TAP test scores were shared with all teachers, the school board and parents. Scores were graphed and areas of weakness were noted and addresses with the teachers.</p>			

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

No data submitted.

PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
♦ To meet the state educational thoroughness standards.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Students are required to pass state adopted competencies in order to receive credit.
♦ To reduce the student dropout rate, increase the graduation rate and increase the number of college completers.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	No students have dropped out so far. We have had some students who returned to their home school due to an incorrect fit with the type of education we are delivering here
♦ To increase the degree of satisfaction among employers about the work quality of graduates.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	We will not have any graduates for two years at that time a record will be kept of employer satisfaction.
♦ To increase scores on standard tests, such as ITBS, SAT, ACT, etc.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Base line scores were collected in Oct. 1999. We had the students such a short period that we feel that this is only baseline data.
♦ To increase the level and amount of parent involvement.	Exceeded Met Needs Improvement Did Not Address	Parents are given the opportunity to serve on several committees such as the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committee, PTO, mentors and chaperones

GOVERNANCE		Circle One: P=Parent S=Staff CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position	Circle One: E=Elected A=Appointed		<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
	Board of Directors	CM	2 years	A		President, leads meetings
		CM	“	A		Meets monthly, holds equal authority with remaining Board
		P	“	E		“
		CM	“	E		“
		CM	“	E		“
		CM	“	E		“
		CM	“	E		“
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom		<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>
	Administration	Principal	1 year	Yes		Educational leader, disciplines students, reports to State Department, additional duties of a superintendent
		Name	# Parents	# Staff	# CM	<i>Responsibilities of each committee</i>
	Committees	PTO	10	2	3 student 25	Plans activities that support the teachers and students. Plans fund raising for the school
		Oversite Committee	4	3		Advises the Principal
		Technical Advisory Committee	5	4		Advises on career pathways, technical support, provides job shadow and internships

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$4860
Operating Budget	\$554,086
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>Describe how funding is utilized: Funds are filtered through the District to support a part time Special Education Aid</p>
Audit	Date: Between May & Sept. Auditor: Balukoff & Lindstrom Shared With: Meridian School District, MCHS Board
Long-Term Debt	\$ 0
Short-Term Debt	\$ 0
OTHER OUTCOMES	
Student Attendance Rate	96%
Student Enrollment	Total: 114 Waiting List: 100
Number Of Students Leaving Since Beginning of the School Year	#: 18 Reasons For Leaving: 1 student expelled 17 returned to home high school, not a good fit for the program we offer

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Dual Enrollment	% In College: 0 % In District Academic: 0 Non-Acad.: 15
Staff Development Opportunities	Concept Based Teaching School to Work Visits to Tech Businesses in the community, Hewlett Packard, Micron Sears Technology
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 7 # PT: 0 # Certified: 7 Avg. Teaching Experience: 9 Years # With MA Degree: 3 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0
Number of Departing Staff	#: 0
Parent Involvement	Hours: 2000 Types Of Involvement: car washes, fund raising, dinner

MOSCOW CHARTER SCHOOL

Sponsoring District: Moscow School District

LOCATION: Moscow	OPENING DATE: August 15, 1998
GRADE LEVELS: K-6	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 15:1 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 13:1
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Moscow has a policy of open enrollment through a lottery process of random selection. If classes are not filled after the initial enrollment period, students are accepted in the order that they apply until classes are filled	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: Flexible multi-age groupings; students advance to the next grade when they are ready.	
FACILITY: The facility utilized for the school for the past two years is located in Paradise Hills Church. Average classroom size is 17' by 18'. A large playground is attached to the facility. The facility is inspected annually by the Moscow Fire Chief and the local Health Department and by state facilities inspector as part of our required accreditation process. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temporary Total Sq. Ft: 3200	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 3% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 24% Black: 1.5% Special needs: 3% Hispanic: 0% LEP: 0% Native Am: 1.5% Title I: 0% White: 94% Children of organizers: 1.5%	
MISSION: To provide a positive and secure academic and physical learning environment for each child. Each child will be instilled with a lifetime love of learning and the ability to learn how to learn. Each child will be assisted in developing a strong sense of self worth and respect for others and the world around them. Finally, each child will be encouraged to recognize his or her own ability to contribute something unique to our society.	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

1. We work cooperatively with the Univ. of Idaho. We provide a practicum site for various elementary education classes offered by the University of Idaho.
2. We are currently establishing a cooperative plan with the Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute for expanded environmental education and to develop new models to teach environmental concepts using a project based hands-on approach.
3. Our school participates in Moscow Community Renaissance Fair by providing theater and music entertainment for the participants.

MAJOR EVENTS HOSTED

Each year we host a major theater production written and produced by students and faculty to showcase integrated curriculum practices at the Moscow Charter School. The production is presented at the Lionel Hampton School of Music at the University of Idaho.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Block Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Education Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program:</i>			
	<p>The Moscow Charter School emphasizes environmental and global awareness throughout the school year. Basic skills are taught using both traditional and holistic methods. Field trips and guest speakers enhance theme topics. The core curriculum offers a broad range of study in language arts, math, science, technology and the arts. The curriculum is selected and presented to meet the varying learning characteristics of the individual student.</p>			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<i>Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes:</i>			
	<p>We at the Charter School feel very strongly that standardized test are generally misused and misunderstood. Therefore, our analysis is limited to using the test as a general indicator for group achievement levels. This leads us to the conclusion that a majority of our classes are likely at or above grade level. However, the small N and the short history of the school precludes our use of the test as an accurate tool to measure the effectiveness of our curriculum. We use individually administered diagnostics tests to assess student performance and to determine educational needs. Our plans for the future are to expand and improve our utilization of individually administered diagnostic tests to identify individual student and curricular needs.</p>			

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

ITBS

Grade Level	98-99	99-00
3	57 composite	65 composite
4		64 core
5	92 composite	75 composite
5		85 core

Grade level percentile ranks are student norms.

Idaho Reading Indicator- Fall 99

Grade Level	At grade level	Near grade level	Below grade level
K	14	4	1
1	11	1	0
2	5	1	0
3	4	2	1

Idaho Reading Indicator-Winter 00

Grade Level	At grade level	Near grade level	Below grade level
K	15	4	1
1	10	1	0
2	6	2	0
3	5	2	2

Direct Writing Assessment and Direct Math Assessment

Scores not available yet for 1999-2000.

PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
<p>♦ To provide a child-centered environment that will instill in each student a goal for lifetime learning and a strong sense of self-worth.</p>	<p>Exceeded</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Partially Met</p> <p>Did Not Address</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An important facet of our child-centered environment is the diverse curriculum option offered to enhance varying talents & interests of our students (see weekly academic schedule and list of special teachers). 2. We have built in regular problem solving sessions where the staff reviews and discusses the needs of individual students (see staff meeting agendas for listing of this item). 3. We have constructed an environment where we actively teach children to be respectful and kind to each other. We monitor this informally through constant observation and frequent interview with students (you may wish to conduct personal interviews with students focusing on their feelings comparing Moscow Charter School with their previous school).
<p>♦ To provide a well-rounded curriculum that will allow each student to recognize his or her talents and ability to contribute something unique.</p>	<p>Exceeded</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Partially Met</p> <p>Did Not Address</p>	<p>Our students are provided with a wide variety of curricular offerings (list of special classes).</p>

PERFORMANCE GOALS continued	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
<p>♦ To design lessons that include multiple modalities that will allow each student to recognize and utilize his or her own individual learning strategies</p>	<p>Exceeded</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Partially Met</p> <p>Did Not Address</p>	<p>All students are assessed according to their individual needs (see learning summaries, basic skill portfolios, general progress portfolio and list of special classes).</p>
<p>♦ To provide each student with a sense of control and mastery over technology as it relates to the learning process as well as solving real life problems in a global community.</p>	<p>Exceeded</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Partially Met</p> <p>Did Not Address</p>	<p>Out students use technology on a daily basis as tool to think with. In addition we provide special classes that provide advanced technology skills to students with special talents and interest (see technology curriculum for details on specialized coursework and student demonstrations upon your request).</p>
<p>♦ To create a foundation for learning upon which students can build and maintain successful careers in professions of their own choosing.</p>	<p>Exceeded</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Needs Improvement</p> <p>Did Not Address</p>	<p>1. Technology and communication skills are two strong elements that will determine the level of professional success of students in the 21st century. These skills are emphasized in the theater, creative writing and technology component of our curriculum (teacher, parent, and student interviews).</p>

PERFORMANCE GOALS continued	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
<p>♦ To encourage a sense of personal balance by creating an appreciation of the arts and an understanding of the role fitness and good health play in a positive lifestyle.</p>	<p>Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address</p>	<p>Qualified and creative individuals provide specialized instruction in the arts and movement education. These individuals work together as a team to provide a curriculum that fosters appreciation for all components of the arts. Fitness, motor skills, character education and healthy attitudes are taught by the martial arts instructor (student, parent and special teacher interview).</p>
<p>♦ To provide each student with a sense of community through frequent contact with the local culture in the form of guest speakers and field trips.</p>	<p>Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address</p>	<p>Field trips are conducted in all subject areas on a regular basis (see school calendar for scheduled events).</p>
<p>♦ To create programs where respect for others and the environment is a priority.</p>	<p>Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address</p>	<p>We provide a specialized curriculum and teacher for the entire school in environmental education. We have developed a school wide recycling program. A formal martial arts program provides character education (see list of special classes and direct observation of student behavior in the school).</p>

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position		E=Elected A=Appointed	Responsibilities of each individual
	Board of Directors	P	1 yr.		A	Chairwoman, Conducting Meeting
		P	1 yr.		A	Member and Chair of Building Committee
		P	2 yrs.		A	Member and member of Building Committee
		P	2 yrs.		A	Member and Chair of Finance Committee
		P	2 yrs.		A	Member and Chair of Special Education Committee
		Title	Length of time in current position		Also teaches in classroom	Responsibilities of each individual
	Administration	Mary Lang, Ed.D.	2 yrs.		Yes	Executive Director
		Jim Christiansen	1 yr.		No	Principal
		Name	# Parents	# Staff	# CM	Responsibilities of each committee
	Committees	Building Committee	2	1		Preparation and Design for the new building.
		Finance Committee	1	2		Preparation of yearly budgets
		Special Education Committee		3		General Special Education Plan
		Textbook Committee	1	1		Ordering books to fit with curriculum

FINANCIAL	1998-1999	1999-2000	
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$3,500	\$5,000	
Operating Budget	\$89,000	\$415,000	
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>♦ Describe how funding is utilized:</p>	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>♦ Describe how funding is utilized:</p> <p>Providing special education for two students</p>	
Audit	Date: 10/99 Auditor: Hayden & Ross Shared With: Moscow School Board & State	Date: Will be conducted in Sept. 2000	
Long-Term Debt	Moscow Charter School has accumulated no debt.		
Short-Term Debt			
OTHER OUTCOMES			
Student Attendance Rate	95%	95%	
Student Enrollment	Total: 32 Waiting List: 0	Total: 64 Waiting List: 4	
Number Of Students Leaving Since Beginning of the School Year	#: 6 Reasons For Leaving: Families moved to another area.	#: 8 Reasons For Leaving: 6 Families moved to another area. 2 The parents of these siblings were dissatisfied with the curriculum.	

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1998-1999	1999-2000
Dual Enrollment NA	% In District Academic: 9% Non-Acad.: <i>Not stated</i>	% In District Academic: 6% Non-Acad.: <i>Not stated</i>
Staff Development Opportunities	Accelerated Reader Training (staff)	Breakthrough to literacy Training (staff) Waterford Reading Program Training (staff)
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 2 # PT: 1 # Certified: 3 Avg. Teaching Experience: 4.3 Years # with MA Degree: 1 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0	# FT: 4 # PT: 0 # Certified: 4 Avg. Teaching Experience: 6.5 Years # with MA Degree: 1 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0
Number of Departing Staff	#: 2 Reasons For Leaving: Other job Pregnancy	#: 2 Reasons For Leaving: Husbands obtaining job elsewhere in both cases.
Parent Involvement	Hours: 3 hours per week Types Of Involvement: Classroom assistance, lunchroom and library	Hours: 10 hours per week Types Of Involvement: Classroom assistance and library Committee involvement
Other Volunteers	40 Total Hours/Year 40 Classroom Hours/Year	100 Total Hours/Year 50 Classroom Hours/Year

Nampa Charter School

Sponsoring District: Nampa School District

LOCATION: Nampa	OPENING DATE: July 1, 1999
GRADE LEVELS: K-8	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 23.3 to 1 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: 10 to 1
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Lottery Preference given to students residing within Nampa School District Parental/Guardian involvement/support required as stipulated in the charter.	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: Single Track Schedule; multiage	
FACILITY: Portable classrooms <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temporary Total Sq. Ft: 13,000	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 2% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: N/A% Black: 0% Special needs: 8% Hispanic: 3% LEP: N/A Native Am: 0% Title I: N/A White: 95% Children of organizers: 16%	
MISSION: The Nampa Charter School mission is to develop students who are competent, confident, productive and responsible young adults who possess the habits, skills and attitudes to succeed in high school and be offered the invitation of a post-secondary education and satisfying employment. The philosophy of the Nampa Charter School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place.	
COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Community service is an integral part of the curriculum at the Nampa Charter School. Students are caretakers of their environment. They do most of the custodial work for the school and ensure that the church grounds and rooms are cleaned before leaving each day. The students that help in the adjoining church daycare center practice service to others. They help feed and entertain the babies and toddlers each noon hour. Students do all their community service work outside of school time – before and after school and at lunchtime. They do not use instructional time for community service activities. All students in 7 th and 8 th grade are required to do a minimum of 30 hours community service. This has been well received by the community and has helped enhance the reputation of our charter school with the stakeholders in the city of Nampa.	

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.			
Block Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Core Knowledge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foreign Language 4 th – 8 th grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Individual Education Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program:</i></p> <p><i>Gifted and Talented Enrichment:</i> The Nampa Charter School environment will allow areas to be pursued beyond the scope of the regular curriculum. This will be accomplished through but not limited to clustering, competitions, consultations, curriculum clustering, honors classes, independent study, interest-based workshops during intercessions, and pull-out classes.</p> <p><i>Community Service:</i> This service is designed to instill a sense of individual, social and civic responsibility. It will enable the learners to use newly found knowledge to solve community problems. Specifics of the program are determined by the learners and staff during the initial weeks of each school year, based on current community needs.</p> <p><i>Music Training:</i> It is our belief that early musical training- particularly on the piano- can dramatically boost a child's brain power, building the kind of skills necessary to succeed in high level math and science. There will be a piano lab within the first two years of inception of the charter school where primary students (K-3) will learn the basics of playing the keyboard.</p> <p><i>Character Training Program:</i> Provides "expectation training" through memorization and dramatization of classic poetry and historical passages, as well as staff who model essential traits of good character. The staff ensures a safe, kind environment, which allows students to acquire essential information and attitudes that will help them lead productive lives. Our character training program is proactive aligned approach. Components include but not limited to a strong emphasis on kindness, the "golden rule", and a reward system which honors students who are hard working, responsible, honest, respectful, etc. The focus on dramatization and memorization of classic poetry rich in moral education and the daily recitation, discussion, and application to life situations, creates a sensitivity for students and staff.</p>			
Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.			
Idaho Reading Indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Science Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Metropolitan Reading/Math Grades 1-2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Waterford Testing K-3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes: Certified staff utilizes the data received to identify areas where each student struggles, to identify general weaknesses in instruction, and to plan for those weaknesses. Certified staff uses all data to align concepts between grade levels.</p>
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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Nat'l Student Norms</i>	<i>Nat'l School Norms</i>
3	Reading	75	92
	Language	69	77
	Math	85	95
	Core Total	77	91
4	Reading	82	98
	Language	71	85
	Math	88	99
	Core Total	81	97
5	Reading	68	79
	Language	64	77
	Math	81	96
	Core Total	71	86
6	Reading	67	80
	Language	64	77
	Math	85	99
	Core Total	74	99
7	Reading	72	87
	Language	74	93
	Math	84	99
	Core Total	79	95

Special Note: Per our charter contract, Nampa Charter School stated that our students would be in the top quartile nationally on the ITBS test. Although the contract did not state specifically which norm, student or school, at the time it was written, school norms were published exclusively in Idaho. The top quartile scores referred to were “school norm” percentages.

Idaho Reading Indicator

	Fall Testing	Winter Testing
Kindergarten	1 – 9%	1 – 8%
	2 – 52%	2 – 67%
	3 – 39%	3 – 25%
Grade 1	1 – 30%	1 – 0%
	2 – 22%	2 – 20%
	3 – 52%	3 – 80%
Grade 2	1 – 7%	1 – 4%
	2 – 22%	2 – 18%
	3 – 70%	3 – 79%
Grade 3	1 – 4%	1 – 0%
	2 – 22%	2 – 20%
	3 – 74%	3 – 80%
DWA	results not in	

DMA

results not in

PERFORMANCE GOALS	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
♦ Score in the top quartile on standardized tests on the national, state, and district levels after a period of two consecutive academic years at the charter school	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
♦ Reading at grade level by 3 rd grade	Exceeded Met (80% met this area) Partially Met Did Not Address	Idaho Reading Indicator ITBS - Reading
♦ Computing math at grade level by 3 rd grade	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	ITBS – Math Weekly Math Concept tests
♦ Student absenteeism is less than 4%	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Attendance Records
♦ Student tardies are less than 2%	Exceeded Met Needs Improvement Did Not Address	Attendance Records
♦ 80% of the student body accomplishes the Personalized Learning Goals to be determined by classroom teacher and parent communication and observations.	Exceeded Met Partially Met N/A will have compiled this information by mid-summer/2000.	
♦ Students reflect positive growth on parent surveys done yearly on the child's attitudes and habits toward, but not limited work, ethic, honesty, taking responsibility, self confidence etc	Exceeded Met Partially Met NA will not know until 7/15/00	
♦ Samples of student work depicting, integrated, extended, refined and meaningful utilization of knowledge.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Technology - all students started a database assessment program

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position	E=Elected A=Appointed	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	Board of Directors	P	10 mos.	A	Governing Board Chair	
		P	10 mos.	A	Secretary	
		P	10 mos.	A		
		P	10 mos.	A		
		P	1 mo.	A	Governing Board Vice-Chair	
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom	<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	Administration	Principal	10 mos.	N	Operate school on a day to day basis	
		Ancillary Support	10 mos.	N	Custodial and Support Stuff-clean classrooms/bathrooms daily	
		Name	# Parents	# Staff	# CM	<i>Responsibilities of each committee</i>
	Committees	Advisory	12	2	2	Data gathering resource, and provide input and advice to the governing board.
		P.T.O.	20			PTO officers will serve as a nominating committee to select a slate of nominees to replace outgoing governing board members. The Governing Board will elect the new directors from the slate of nominees.
					PTO will serve as liaisons between teachers and parents.	

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$3,738.00
Operating Budget	\$1,127,500.00
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>♦ Describe how funding is utilized: Speech/Language services Psych. Services</p>
Audit	Date: July, 2000 Auditor: Jo C. Bolen, Gibson, Scott, & Dean, CPA's Shared With: Nampa School District, Charter Board, and any interested person from the community.
Long-Term Debt	\$ 0
Short-Term Debt	\$ 0
OTHER OUTCOMES	
Student Attendance Rate	96%
Student Enrollment	Total: 233 Waiting List: 240
Number Of Students Leaving After Beginning of the School Year	#: 17 Reasons For Leaving: 7 moved out of district and/or state 4 transportation issue 1 larger Jr. Hi. Experience 2 home schooled 2 unknown 1 unhappy w/ academic and behavior program.

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Dual Enrollment	% In District Academic: 0 Non-Acad.: 10 %
Staff Development Opportunities	Technology class 100% G/T workshop 88% Art workshop 88% Office Software Workshop 3 attended “Boardsmanship” inservice for Charter Board – Senator Daryl Diede
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 7 # PT: 5 # Certified: All Avg. Teaching Experience: 9 Years # with MA Degree: 2 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0
Number of Departing Staff	#: 0
Parent Involvement	Hours: Over 10,000 hours <i>Types Of Involvement:</i> Open up the school which included laying sod, putting up whiteboards, building shelves, working in classrooms as parent. Parents are totally responsible for all aspects of the lunch program. Hot lunch 4x a week by local restaurants. Parents deliver the lunches, collect money, etc. Volunteers every day since the school opened.
Other Volunteers	1000 Total Hours/Year 1000 Classroom Hours/Year

Pocatello Community Charter School

Sponsoring District: Pocatello School District

LOCATION: Pocatello	OPENING DATE: September 9, 1999
GRADE LEVELS (for each year of operation): 1999/2000 – K-6	STUDENT/FTE TEACHER RATIO: 20:1 STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: <i>not stated</i>
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Open enrollment. In the event of over-enrollment, admission will be determined by random drawing. The names drawn will constitute a waiting list.	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: multi-age	
FACILITY: Former office area at the back of a mall (approx. 12,500 square feet) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 0% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 0.025% Black: 0.008% Special needs: 0.08% Hispanic: 0% LEP: 0% Native Am.:.008% Title I: 0% White: 97% Children of school organizers: 0.06%	
MISSION: To create a partnership of parents and teachers, dedicated to <i>academically challenging each student</i> , emphasizing innovation and flexibility.	
COMMUNITY RELATIONS: PCCS Governing Board has given numerous presentations to everyone from the local board of realtors to children's advocacy groups. Joined the Greater Pocatello Chamber of Commerce. Handed out flyers and brochures at various festivals, fairs, offices around town. Participated in local television coverage and staged public information meetings. Future plans of taking in businesses more with brown bag luncheons for local businesses.	

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Block Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Personal Education Plans (PEP)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Portfolio Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to your program: The Pocatello Community Charter School (PCCS) educates children in grades K-6, with plans to expand to K-8 in the next two years. The PCCS features multi-age classes, personalized education goals, school uniforms, an integrated, project-based curriculum, portfolio assessment, and a parent/teacher governing board. We serve students from all socio-economic levels who reside within School District 25 boundaries.			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Science Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stanford Diagnostic Tests	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			STAR reading tests	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes: Standardized tests are used to assist in the development of the individual learning plans.			

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

ITBS	Administered to all 3-6 grade students. Proficiency level on average slightly below grade level. This reflects the proficiency of the students coming here from other schools for this first year.
DWA	Administered to all 4 th grade students. Results not yet available.
DMA	Administered to all 4 th grade students. Results not yet available.
IRI	Administered to all K-3 students in October, January, & May. Only eight (8) of our students scored a “1” indicating remediation is necessary.

STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
♦ (non-academic goals) The ability to think independently, creatively, and critically.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Teacher input
♦ Flexibility in academic, social, and personal arenas.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Teacher input
♦ The self-motivation, self-discipline, and self-confidence necessary to continue as a lifetime learner.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Teacher input
♦ A mastery of basic academic disciplines and democracy skills.	Exceeded Met Partially Met Did Not Address	Teacher input
♦ (academic goals) Students enrolled in the PCCS in grades 3 – 6 will show standardized test scores comparable to those for School District 25 as well as successful completion of required portfolios and exhibitions.	Exceeded Met Needs Improvement Did Not Address year	Teacher input N/A this

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff ST=Student CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position	Circle One: E=Elected A=Appointed		<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	School Board	P	1 yr.	A		Marjanna Hulet – Governing Board Chair	
		P	1 yr.	A		Mike Engle – Vice Chair	
		P	1 yr.	A		Jo Ann Cole-Hansen - Treasurer	
		P	1 yr.	A		Rhonda Stickney - Secretary	
		P	1 yr.	E		Gina Judd – Volunteer Coordinator	
		S	6 mos.	E		Whisper Stoddard – Teacher Representative	
		CM		E A		Not currently filled	
		Frequency with which the board convenes: Bi-Monthly					
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom		<i>Responsibilities of each individual</i>	
	Administration	Dean	1 yr.	No		Linda Creighton – Oversees day-to-day operations	
		Office Manager	1 yr.			Tandy Markcum – Manages business affairs	
		Name	# P	# S	# ST	# CM	<i>Responsibilities of each committee</i>
	Committees	Eighteen sub- committees	<i>Not stated</i>				Help arrange learning opportunities in the community; come to school to assist teachers, students & staff; share information or advocate for the school; increase financial resources available to the school; or help other parents develop their parenting skills.
		PCCS PIE (Parents Involved in Education)					To coordinate parent volunteer activities within the classroom and to promote social activities for teachers, students, and families.

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$5,329
Operating Budget	\$639,482
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>◆ Students Identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Audit	<p>Date: Will be completed 1st year ending 6/30/00</p> <p>Auditor: <i>Not stated</i></p> <p>Shared With: <i>Not stated</i></p>
Long-Term Debt	\$115,554 As Of 03/01/00
Short-Term Debt	\$0
OTHER OUTCOMES	1999-2000
Student Attendance Rate	93%
Student Enrollment	<p>Total: 120</p> <p>Waiting List: 159</p>
Number Of Students Leaving Mid-Year	<p>#:21</p> <p>Reasons For Leaving:</p> <p>◆ Dissatisfaction</p> <p>◆ Moving out of area</p>
Dual Enrollment	<p>% In District</p> <p>Academic: <i>Not stated</i></p> <p>Non-Acad.: 2 students</p>

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Staff Development Opportunities	Through Expeditionary Learning by Outward Bound (ELOB). Teacher development to also include site visits to other charter schools/ELOB sites, as well as traditional in-service days. A board retreat will take place and team building exercises will continue.
Teacher Qualifications	<p># FT: 7 # PT: 6</p> <p># Special Ed Endorsements: 2</p> <p># Non-Certified Giving Instruction: 1</p> <p>Avg. Teaching Experience: 5 Years</p> <p># with MA Degree: 0</p> <p># Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0</p>
Number of Departing Staff	<p>#: 2</p> <p>Reasons For Leaving:</p> <p>Relocation</p>
Parent Involvement	<p>Hours: <i>Not stated</i></p> <p>Types Of Involvement: Serve on Advisory Councils & committees; and eighteen sub-committees.</p>
Other Volunteers	<p>500 Total Hours/Year</p> <p>300 Classroom Hours/Year</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded</p>

Renaissance Charter School

Sponsoring District: Moscow Public School District

LOCATION: Moscow	OPENING DATE: September 1, 1999
GRADE LEVELS: K-High School	STUDENT/FT TEACHER RATIO: <i>not submitted</i> STUDENT/ADULT RATIO: <i>not submitted</i>
ADMISSIONS POLICY: Resident of Moscow School District Random Lottery	
STUDENT ORGANIZATION: Multi-age/ Multi-ability Groupings	
FACILITY: Rented modular building for the first 4 years. Facilities for subsequent years and phases of the charter school will be new and different. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temporary Total Sq. Ft: 5,712	
STUDENT PROFILE: Asian/PacIs: 0% Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 0% Black: 0% Special needs: 30% Hispanic: 0% LEP: 0% Native American: 0% Title I: 0% White: Children of organizers: 10% 100%	
MISSION: The mission of the Moscow Renaissance Charter School is to develop, through on-going community-wide collaboration, an innovative, research-based school which will serve all students in the community; will complement and enhance the educational programs and opportunities within Moscow Public School District; will seek to develop students' multiple frames of knowledge through integrated, experiential learning opportunities; will provide technology-rich education for all students; and will be a model charter school for the state of Idaho, in compliance with the legislative purposed of the Idaho charter school law and all other relevant state and federal laws.	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

UI Conferences & Enrichment use facilities for community classes after school & weekends

AmeriCorps-1 member assists part time in primary--RCS funds cooperatively

Renaissance Fair: RCS had food booth

Palouse Suzuki Strings: RCS string teacher funded cooperatively

Hop-a-thon through MDA (Spring, 2000)

Mountain Gymnastics in Moscow--local business provides gymnastics facility for fee

Adventure Bound/Giant Steps has cooperative agreement with RCS to provide after school programs.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Check all characteristics that can be used to describe your school's program.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Block Scheduling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiage/Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Character Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Intelligences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Core Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Extended Year/Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology As Major Focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Foreign Language At All Grades	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thematic/Interdisciplinary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Hands-On	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-Round	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Education Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Based	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Characteristics, courses (including college prep), and/or instructional strategies that are unique to the program:			
	Emphasis on arts including regular and systematic music instruction utilizing the Suzuki approach.			
	Check all assessments that your school uses to gauge student performance.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Idaho Reading Indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Writing Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Mathematics Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) COMPASS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Science Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(ACT) PLAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct Social Studies Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PSAT	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Portfolios	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Test of Achievement and Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Education/Learning Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nat'l Assessment of Education Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Describe how, if at all, your school uses standardized tests for formative purposes:				
<i>No information submitted.</i>				

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

No data submitted.

PERFORMANCE GOALS:	Level of Accomplishment	Information Source
◆ Provision of a safe environment	<i>Not stated.</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Charter school will empower educators at the school to maintain classroom discipline	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Improved student communication	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Preparation of students for post secondary educational programs and work force.	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Training of students in current educational technology.	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Development of student character traits.	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Stable charter school enrollment.	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
◆ Documented community satisfaction with the charter school	<i>Not stated</i>	<i>Not stated</i>

GOVERNANCE		P=Parent S=Staff CM=Community Member	Length of time in current position		E=Elected A=Appointed	Responsibilities of each individual
	Board of Directors	CM	<i>No infor- mation submitted.</i>	All appointed	President	
		P			<i>Board member</i>	
		P			Secretary/Treasurer	
		CM			<i>Board member</i>	
		S			<i>Board member</i>	
		S			<i>Board member</i>	
		Title	Length of time in current position	Also teaches in classroom		Responsibilities of each individual
	Administration	Director	<i>No information submitted.</i>			Day-to day operations of the school, supervision, development and implementation of staff development, budget and facilities management.
		Name	# Parents	# Staff	# CM	Responsibilities of each committee
Committees	<i>No information submitted.</i>					

FINANCIAL	1999-2000
Estimated Cost Per Student	\$6,880
Operating Budget	\$495,326.00
Sources Of Funding	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local Tax Revenues</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>Additional Federal Funding:</p> <p>♦ Students identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>♦ If yes, receiving all funding or services as qualified: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know</p> <p>♦ Describe how funding is utilized: To contract for services for those students</p>
Audit	Date: Aug 2000 Auditor: Hayden & Ross Shared With: <i>Not stated</i>
Long-Term Debt	None
Short-Term Debt	None
OTHER OUTCOMES	
Student Attendance Rate	90%
Student Enrollment	Total: 72 Waiting List: 0
Number Of Students Leaving After Beginning of the School Year	#: 6 Reasons For Leaving: 5 returned to school district 1 returned to home

OTHER OUTCOMES <i>cont.</i>	1999-2000
Graduation Rate	Not stated
Dual Enrollment	% In College: 0 % In District Academic: 0 Non-Acad.: 0.014%
Staff Development Opportunities	Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
Teacher Qualifications	# FT: 3 # PT: 7 # Certified: 6 # Waivers: 3 Avg. Teaching Experience: 4 Years # with MA Degree: 1 # Teaching In Areas Outside Endorsements: 0
Number of Departing Staff	#: 3 Reasons For Leaving: 2 budget cuts 1 resignation
Parent Involvement	Types Of Involvement: ➤ committees ➤ class volunteers
Other Volunteers	800 Total Hours/Year 200 Classroom Hours/Year <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded